INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER: DEVELOPING A TRAINING MODEL THAT PREPARES CLERGYWOMEN OF COLOR TO CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

Beatrice Alghali

BS, Wayne State University, 1994
MBA, University of Phoenix, 2002
MDiv United Theological Seminary, 2021

Mentor

Dextor Cannon, DMin

A FINAL PROJECT SUBMITTED TO
THE DOCTORAL STUDIES COMMITTEE
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Dayton, Ohio
February 2025

Copyright © 2025 by Beatrice Alghali
All rights reserved

CONTENTS

ABSTRACT v

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS vi

DEDICATION viii

ABBREVIATIONS ix

EPIGRAPH x

INTRODUCTION 1

CHAPTER

1. MINISTRY FOCUS 8
2. BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS 31
3. HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS 55
4. THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS 80
5. INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS 105
6. PROJECT ANALYSIS 125

INTRODUCTION……...125

RESEARCH DESIGN……128

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESEARCH PROJECT……..130

WEEKLY COHORT STUDY OVERVIEW…….132

SUMMARY OF LEARNING……...138

FIRST COLLECTION OF DATA……..139

SECOND COLLECTION OF DATA…….143

THIRD COLLECTION OF DATA…….149

CONCLUSION……158

APPENDIX

A. EVENT LETTER…….164

B. EVENT FLYER……...166

C. PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY……..168

D. APPENDIX D TITLE 171

E. GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONNAIRE 173

F. INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS 175

G. FOCUS JOURNALING ASSIGNMENTS 177

H. SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS 179

BIBLIOGRAPHY 181

ABSTRACT

INTERCULTURAL ENCOUNTER: DEVELOPING A TRAINING MODEL
THAT PREPARES CLERGYWOMEN OF COLOR TO
CROSS-CULTURAL LEADERSHIP MINISTRY

by
Beatrice Alghali
United Theological Seminary, 2025

Mentor

Dextor Cannon, DMIN

This project was implemented in the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church. Clergywomen of color are unprepared to address the resistance they encounter in cross-cultural appointments. If these clergywomen participate in a training about ministry within a cross-cultural context, then they will be equipped to address resistance from parishioners. The project was conducted during a six-week period. Data collection methods included pre-and post-questionnaires, focused journaling, group discussions, and individual interviews. Results revealed clergywomen who participated in this training about ministry within a cross-cultural context were equipped and prepared to address resistance from parishioners.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

God is good all the time and all the time God is good! I give God glory and honor for directing my path to this point of pursuing a doctoral degree. My heartfelt gratitude is extended to Dr. Dexter Cannon for his leadership and mentorship. His continued support and encouragement challenged me to push harder in my academic work. My faculty advisor, Dr. Anthony Le Donne, read every word and corrected my Biblical Foundations' work with support and understanding. To all the faculty and staff at UTS who began the journey with me from semester one to semester six, thank you for sharing your wisdom. My editor, a man of God, the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Cummings, thank you for editing the manuscripts and deservedly having the last word of work entrusted into your hands. You worked with integrity, compassion, and understanding. I could not be at this juncture without you. My peer associate Emmanuel Enefazu-Ossai, you encouraged me all the time. When I was behind in my writing, you always said "God is good Ma." That was enough energy you gave me, and I would roll up my sleeves and get back to work. Thank you for your support.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my professional associates at work: Rev. Dr. Kevin Smalls, Rev. Dr. Jenifer Jue, and Rev. Dr. Tracey Fletcher- Allen. All of you are angels sent to be by my side. Your hard work reading materials was so inevitable. Your prayers, support, and encouragement helped me tremendously. It was a privilege to have you around me. To my good friend and sister in Christ, the Rev. Dr. Michelle McGhee,

you always encouraged me and provided insight when I had stopped writing. Your brilliant support as a UMC pastor was so helpful.

To my younger sister, Pamela Ayuma Sagala, you were my prayer partner. You encouraged me through prayers every moment we spoke. It is done my sister. To the cohort team and clergywomen of color who accepted the invitation to participate in this project, this would not have been completed without you. As drivers behind the wheel, you drove the car safely to its destination — THE END.

To my beloved daughter, Lenah Nyamusi Alghali, I depended so much on you as a graphics designer. Every time I would call you, no matter what time of the night, you picked up the phone and got the work done. Forever, you are special in this entire piece of work. To my son, Rashid Alghali, you cheered me on after completing one chapter; I extend my heartfelt love to you. Lastly, to the love of my life, my husband Hamid Alghali, for the sleepless nights I stayed on the computer, you were patient with me and gave all the support you could. You took charge and prepared meals even when I could not eat, but you made sure I drunk my smoothie. Thank you for being there for me. I would be lost without your support. What an invaluable team of people I was surrounded with? You all demonstrated what Nelson Mandela said best, “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.” You did this for me.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation in memoriam to my parents. My mother, Elima, Nyamusi Sagala, was the first-person to empower me to grow my Christian faith. And my father, Pastor David Sagala Musatsili, passed the baton to me to join ministry. In his own words, he said, “Take over my daughter,” and he died the same day leaving me wondering the logic meaning of his words only later to discover it was a call to ministry.

I am indebted to my late grandmother, beloved, Lenah Mwaniga Ketoyo, who early in life instilled in me learning critical thinking skills through her work of art and pottery. Her education has carried me throughout my life experiences and enabled me to become a leader by accepting the call to personal and congregational transformation.

Lastly, I dedicate this work to all women in cross-cultural ministry that have remained silent from speaking their experiences. It is this silence that gave me courage to do the work and encourage them that the gift of listening is always bathed in courage to hear the other voices on the journey of intercultural encounter.

ABBREVIATIONS

CC	Cultural Competence
CC/CR	Cross Cultural/Cross Racial
CCCT	Cross-Cultural Communication Theory
CCT	Cross-Cultural Theology
CIM	Cultural Intelligence Model
CWOC	Clergywomen of Color (African Americans, Africans, Hispanics, Korean, Asians, and Multiracial)
FT	Feminist Theology
MC	Michigan Conference
MCA	Michigan Conference Area
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
PT	Practical Theology
SAT	Self-Assessment Tool
SWOT	Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities Threats
UMC	United Methodist Church
UTS	United Theological Seminary
WT	Womanist Theology

What counts in life is not the mere fact that we have lived. It is what difference we have made to the lives of others that will determine the significance of the life we lead.

- Nelson Mandela, https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/07/nelson-mandela-south-africa-quotes-madiba-inspiration/

INTRODUCTION

As this journey began, I knew the road was going to be tough, but with faith – and with God – all things are possible (Matthew 19:26). I had to walk by faith and not by sight.

> In a small village full of grass thatched mud houses, the sun rises from the East to West. Early in the morning, birds and roosters would awaken people with their loud sounds. The morning breeze and calmness of the village were as quiet and pleasant with the sun shading of light. Then the daily work began. People would go to their daily chores. Hard manual farming in scorching temperatures, and if the rains were absent, the smell of the dry lands left the dust behind, and this was the order of the day for the people together building their village. Through the lens of this background, I will tell a story of a little girl born weighing, 8 pounds, chubby and healthy surviving through starvation and now a servant leader of God in ministry seeking truth to intercultural encounters.[1]

The journey that I travelled, leading to my Doctor of Ministry degree, was one of the most exciting tours taken to United Theological Seminary in Dayton, Ohio. This was the encounter of a lifetime. The reader must understand that a journey can never be too long; it must come to an end. Mine seemed to be too long at the beginning, but as time went by, it proved to be short. The encounters on the journey were not as smooth as one would expect, but it was the turns and twists that got us to where we are today. The experiences brought more sense of listening and hearing the spoken words and the challenges faced by many in cross-cultural ministries. It was those experiences that the leader needs to listen intentionally to prepare others who may be stuck in a cross-cultural

[1] Reflections on the beginning of my life journey. Alghali, 2022.

encounter ministries. Preparation for any journey is vital, and Pheobe sets the preeminent example by being mentored by Apostle Paul to minister to the Romans. I found myself in the same position.

The academic setting at United Theological Seminary (UTS) provided space for me to dig dipper and investigate the challenges faced in cross-cultural ministry. The knowledge provided through textbooks, class discussions, digital library, faculty and staff, mentors, associate peers, and talented various speakers in different workshops throughout the semester made it possible to learn and pull together the information I needed for this intercultural encounter. It was this support and mentorship that inspired me to train other leaders.

Clergywomen of color need mentors and proper preparation before they are appointed in cross-cultural ministries. The resistance they face is not that they are not qualified to be ministers. It is the new environment that takes time for adjustment creating a delayed effect in ministry. Churches are seen to be places of peace. Therefore, current aspects of witness and teachings must be biblically relevant with an overarch desire for many to lead the church of Christ. The epistle to the Romans is very relevant in the churches around the world. The United Methodist Church (UMC) is not different. If the Michigan Conference Area (MCA) can deal with the attitude that embraces Christ and prepares its clergywomen of color (CWOC) for cross-cultural/cross- racial (CC/CR) ministry, then the teaching of the text in Romans may become a prophetic community that loves God**.** If the local churches that quantify clergywomen embrace Paul's teachings instead of pointing out differentiation, perhaps revival and a new missionary spirit would be attained. Intercultural openness in Christ is necessary to announce the gospel to all

nations. As societies deal with the issues of social status, Christians are called to respond and show love that embraces one another — a gift and grace from God who has received them in Christ Jesus.

Succinctly, this study was significant for the doctoral program for several reasons. First, it examined the social history of the congregations behind in comparison to the current UMC as a Christian church. Second, it incorporated findings from diaspora women of descent such as the African Americans, Africans, Asians, Hispanics-Latinos Americans, Koreans, and other multicultural ethnicity in the life and roles of leading as clergywomen within CC/CR encounters. Finally, the study provides an explanation as to why CWOC in the MC of the UMC should not be classified as "second class leaders" by laity and their White counter-parts clergy but instead be seen as the cornerstone for creating a diverse unified church of Christ as reveled by Paul himself in Romans 16.

Chapter one, Ministry Focus, became apparent while training women in my MC. The usefulness and the niche for advanced preparation were evident as the intercultural encounter began in the form of preparation. The nurturing spirit from others increased the need to have influence in other people's lives. The backdrop of this chapter focuses on my life experiences, education, Christian faith, ministry focus, and overall leadership skills that enables me to have influence in other people's lives. The skills attained affirmed the leadership style I possess, which is being strong in administration and teaching that makes preparation and training versatile. Listening to CWOC tell their experiences challenged me to find tools to improve CC ministry. The stories told by CWOC were not just a learning experience but more of a cry for help from loneliness and silence. The experiences spoken in cohort groups are similar to what Jesus went through.

David Augsburger writes,

> Jesus was born in the most rigidly ethnic culture of all time; born in a fiercely nationalistic nation; born in Galilee, the most bigoted backwoods of that nation; born in a country practicing the apartheid of rigid segregation between Jews and Samaritans . . . dogmatic zealots-Roman, Samaritan, and Jewish. Yet he showed no trace of it.[2]

The above quote demonstrates how the mission of the church should be honored. Ethnic culture should not be a roadblock to God's mission. Jesus himself embraces the idea of mixings with all cultures to a accomplish his mission. To that end, the experiences brought by CWOC assimilates and translates to the core value of diversity.

In chapter two, Biblical Foundations, I was intentional in picking the scriptural passage, Romans 16:1-20, as a fundamental passage to the chosen doctoral thesis and project. First, there are special challenges to interpreters linking the Roman letter and specific elements of context. I investigated information, evidence, or arguments that seemed most compelling in the text. Second, the text explores ethical ramifications of women practices in the church and deals with how women are instrumental to serve in alien lands despite their cultural identity. Third, the text guided and supported content of the gathering of Christians ancient in-house churches in reference to the modern church focusing on basic asked questions explored in the matrix of the Christian church. Lastly, the text helped to explain how Christian leadership, as addressed by Paul in the social history of the early Christianity, should be modeled in the modern church with unity, focusing on women's roles, gender, status, and the impact of the social locations of

---

[2] David Augsburger, *Caring Enough To Confront: How to Understand and Express Your Deepest Feelings Toward Others* (Grand Rapids, MI: Revell a division of Baker Publishing Company, 1973), 127.

origin. Therefore, this chapter provides cultural intersectionality that is embedded in the experiences of CWOC in their ministry.

Chapter three, Historical Foundations, focuses on the historical Jesus to the historical founder of Methodism, the Rev. John Wesley. To improve ministry research, investigation and evaluation allowed openness to change in a secular, twenty-first century. John Wesley is the prime example depicted in this chapter. He was the heroic teacher in Methodism's history and his teachings and works can be modeled to help leaders and pastors fulfill their vocations. This chapter advocates for prepared leadership, organization**,** and education within the congregations while empowering laity to be open minded and listen to the Holy Spirit's guidance in CC contextual ministries.

Chapter four, Theological Foundations, focuses on womanist theology. This project captures three theologies — namely, womanist, feminist, and practical theologies. This is done to show intersectionality of Black women as well as women of color answering their vocations to ministry. The cultural intelligence model tool helps with the integration of womanist, feminist, and practical theologies regardless of race, sexual orientation, and other forces that deprive women of color from leading effectively. The tri-theologies helped me as a researcher to create a CC theology which is interwoven together with other theologies. The CWOC were apprehensive at first, but they opened up and spoke candidly after realizing that self-identity was an integral part in their ministry. Thus, collaboration in the church of Christ becomes the true love Jesus was teaching to all who were of different ethnicities.

In chapter five, Interdisciplinary Foundations, I have addressed the components of human behaviors and the cross-cultural communication theory. In the narrative strategies

of clergywomen, we examined patterns reflected in personal barriers among cultures and interrogated the socio-culturally situated identity reflected by these patterns of communication. It is important to identify the transformation that reveals itself as participants strive to negotiate between personal identities, priorities, and the requirements concerning both verbal and nonverbal expressions.

The use of cultural anthropology and cross-cultural communication modalities utilized help prepare and shape CWOC to be culturally congruent and competent. The Competence Intelligence Model tool helps the reader understand human behavior that leaves a set group of people vulnerable based on individual cultural beliefs, norms, and values. This tool enhances the studying of human behavior and their communication paradigm. It also gives a foundation for further research on how the church must be open to correcting barriers that cause division within the church. The study results show that 100% of CWOC surveyed were un-prepared for CC/CR ministry. This is why integrating an interdisciplinary approach, cultural anthropology theory, and cross-cultural communication theory are salient in offering intercultural encounters.

Chapter six, Project Analysis, summarizes the research data that was implemented throughout the project. The data analysis aided in providing individual experiences and arguments that would disqualify any assumptions that CWOC are different to the rest of the pastoral guild. The main focus was addressing issues related to push-back from parishioners. The individuals learned successful traits to apply in their CC ministry and even the larger portion of communication theory. The revelation was that through continued learning, a self-discovery tool – with 100% agreement – that preparation to CC

ministry was lacking; but after training, CWOC had tools to combat pushback from parishioners and adopted techniques to use in avoiding conflict within churches.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

Introduction

In this initial chapter, I address the context in which I serve as a pastor in the Michigan Conference (MC) of the United Methodist Church (UMC). My interest in training and the preparation process of clergywomen of color as leaders in the cross-cultural ministry is of importance to me and other clergywomen of color (CWOC). I examine how the preparing CWOC can be an asset to diversified ministry in the church of Christ.

In this chapter, I reflect on my life experiences: spiritual journey, educational development as a leader prior to becoming a pastor of the cross-cultural church, ministerial journey, and leadership preparation expressing my strengths which have aided in my development as a servant leader. The mentioned aspects helped identify the need to support and prepare CWOC in their cross-cultural ministries. Additionally, the following sections of the chapter helped synergize and develop the doctoral project to support and prepare the coming generations of CWOC to ministry. Conversely, the product helped alleviate the dilemmas CWOC face when appointed in cross-cultural appointments where they face resistance and pushback from the parishioners they are inclined to serve.

Spiritual Journey

My Christian life commenced when I was a little girl in the village. I grew up in a family where my mother was a devoted Christian, and my father was an alcoholic man on the streets. I made a choice to follow my mother's path. I grew up in fear of my father who was abusive toward my brothers and my mother however, I never lost my Christian faith. I knew that someday he would change. My mother's un-wavered prayers kept her children together. Mom would read the Bible to us at night in our vernacular language, sing a song, and pray daily before we went to bed and that was the order of the events in our family. It was due to my mothers' perseverance that I grew up in faith and knew God wanted us all to serve and glorify the Almighty. Through many prayers, my father repented, heard God's calling, and become a pastor late in his life. As a pastor, he brought his family closer to God and died as a devoted, born again Christian and a pastor.

I was baptized at seven-years old. I grew up watching my mother teach Sunday school and Bible lessons under a tree for there were no physical buildings to use. In elementary school, I was the worship leader. I led morning school worship outside the parade before the entire school dispersed to classrooms. In high school, I was appointed as a senior sports captain, a position that required patience and dedication but enhanced my leadership skills. Christian fellowship in high school did augment my faith and I remember over twenty schools gathering in one place fellowshipping and singing. I was told by those present that I was speaking in tongues during prayer time. It was then that my faith was identified.

My most significant religious experience was when I was confirmed at age thirteen years old. Our pastor had given us Scriptures to recite. I was assigned the text in

Mark 10:13-16. I memorized that Scripture and spoke it by heart. The text reminded me of God's grace. Reading how the disciples were turning parents away from bringing children to Jesus was a wake-up call for me. The fact that I was assigned that text changed my understanding of how God's love is so precious. I was reminded that Jesus loves all children — including me. I have used this text in my daily encounters teaching people how Jesus wants us to love one another without discrimination.

My conscious experience of God commenced in high school. We lived under poverty, so I thought God loved rich people more than the poor. I reasoned in the realm of material possessions. Despite my mother's strong belief in God, I often questioned her about who Jesus really was and when he was coming to rescue us from dire poverty. Curiously, I would ask, "mother, when is Jesus coming to visit us?" I had heard that Jesus visited the towns in Jerusalem; so, in Africa, we were not far away from. It was not until my mother started reading Scriptures in our native language to me that I read more for myself about God — first, the Gospel of Mark, and then eventually the entire cannon.

My first experience of God was at youth fellowship where I saw the light of God. The youth group was in a sanctuary where worship music was playing in the background very softly. There were Bibles and candles placed on the altar rail for each one of us. Our leaders explained that those items were for us to use whenever we were ready. We could light the candle, or we could touch the Bible signifying a prayer request, or a sign of accepting Jesus Christ. As I sat there in front of the pew staring at everything, the words of Dennis, the worship leader, struck me. He sang, "I have decided to follow Jesus, no turning back, no turning back." The other camp leaders laid their hands on those who had approached the altar. I was at the altar kneeling instead of lighting the candle. I prayed

nonstop. In that moment, I started to feel like the Holy Spirit was descending on me and just as those thoughts crept into my mind, I felt a warm sensation, an impression that I was in the right place. I imagined this to be a similar sensation that John Wesley felt when "his heart was strangely warmed." In that moment, I was praying in tongues leading to my confession and surrender to Jesus Christ. I never looked back. The world was before me, and the cross was for me. No turning back, no turning back was for me.

Educational Journey

The difficulties in my early life affected my educational journey. However, I have accomplished more than I ever could imagine. I completed high school level back in Kenya, a standard level that qualified me to teach in secondary school. I taught English Language and English Literature courses for several years before I left for Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. There I obtained a job with the American International School teaching in elementary school. Subsequently, I got an opportunity to come to the United States to further my education in 1988. I attended a four-year college, Wayne State University, earning a Bachelor of Science degree in Nutrition and Food Science. This journey was not easy. Being an international student meant paying tuition triple the time than the residence of the state. I was financially poor, and unable to afford to buy textbooks.

I completed my first two years of undergraduate without any textbooks. I borrowed textbooks from classmates, made copies, read, and completed assignments. Finally, I received a $500 scholarship from the science department for excelling in biology. The money was used to pay tuition and buy some textbooks. I knew God was at work. God did not bring me this far for nothing. I was determined that I would get

through college. My family back home was helpless and had no clue what I was going through financially. A friend also connected me to work in McDonald's food chain. I was paid $3.75 per hour. In two weeks, I took home close to $175.00 after taxes. I had to take two buses to work and two more to school and back home. The little money I got was spent on transportation, food, and rent. For years, I could only buy clothes from thrift stores — the only affordable place.

I needed more and pursued a professional career to become a registered dietitian in 1994. I secured a job with the Detroit Health Department. This profession in the health care sector brought a lot of learning, knowledge, growth, and advanced leadership skills. I completed my graduate education at the University of Phoenix in Southfield, Michigan, in 2002, earning an MBA degree in Health Care Management. This achievement opened doors for me to become a small business entrepreneur broadening my quest in leadership management and business marketing.

It was through this profession that I heard a calling to ministry and started seminary at Methodist Theological School in Ohio (MTSO) in 2017. While at MTSO, I faced a lot of challenges. I commuted from Michigan three hours of drive to school and three hours back home. My seminary education was more of reading and writing. I was a slow reader; yet I persevered. There was no way that I was going to fall behind in my many reading assignments required by my professors. The nightmare was that some professors judged me based on my writing skills instead of understanding my passion for ministry. The writing instructor was an atheist and to convince him anything about Jesus Christ was a challenge. The darkness in the tunnel was getting dim and dimmer. I experienced racism. I saw mockery and intimidation, but despite the negatives, I looked

up to the hill where my help cometh from (Psalm 121:1). I knew God would decide my fate. I prayed and overcame the fears of failing. The negatives were a push for me to continue climbing the mountain. The negatives made me a strong person, a strong leader, and a servant of God. I needed an environment that was friendly and welcoming. I transferred to United Theological Seminary (UTS), graduating in Spring 2021 with a Master of Divinity. There was love and peace at UTS. Professors and staff were available, understanding, caring, and had respect for all students regardless of their nationality, gender, or religion beliefs.

I was surrounded by good co-learners, mentors, teachers, advisors, and staff who were willing to share, collaborate and help me financially and academically. My family cheered me on even when I felt I could not do it anymore. The Scripture in Philippians 4:13 (NRSV) reads, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." This was my daily verse. In 2019, 1was appointed by the Bishop David Bard of the Michigan Conference (MC) to serve in a cross-cultural appointment as I focused on my seminary education.

Ministry Journey

The journey began. I was moving forward to encounters that needed some revelations. The journey began with these five questions from the survey posted at the beginning of my divinity course: "Why do we have to learn about other traditions when Christianity is the way, the truth, and the life? Why learn about other faith practices anyway? How will I bring what I am learning "back home" into my family, my congregation, my church community? At what cost to me and my Christian leadership?

Lastly, does "faith" mean the same thing to "others" as it does to me in my Christian tradition?"[1] Reflecting on these questions got me started. I stopped from being nervous to opening my ears and eyes to listen and see respectively while remaining true and compassionate to my innermost self to learn the congregation that saw me as the "other." However, with resilience and determination, I delve into the dimensions about an "other." My encounters in my ministry journey created space for looking for answers about Christian identity in the realm of clergywomen of color (CWOC).

As a doctoral student at UTS, my intention was to develop a project on how clergywomen of color can be prepared for the cross-cultural ministry. A cross sectional of CWOC was sampled from the Michigan Conference of the UMC comparing their Christian experiences in cross- cultural appointments. My life, profession, and ministry experiences with a congregation of different identities influenced my project study. The cross-cultural sensitivities in my ministry context are a gateway for the project. Using pastoral pathways through practical teaching and education, nurturing, and empowerment are central core elements to my personal, spiritual, and professional development that enhanced awareness to help others. For example, helping and training CWOC, bishops, faith leaders, superintendents, and laity learn how to work as one Body of Christ in the local church is paramount. If all parties can reflect on how to embody the teachings of Christian principles, having conversations on cross-cultural differences, then misunderstanding and roadblocks in ministry would be minimal. Working with an aging congregation that is resistant to change, as a CWOC, created human challenges in my

---

[1] Mary E. Hess, "Survey Questions – Class Session," United Theological Seminary, February 1, 2021.

ministry context. Clergywomen of color are appointed to cross-racial appointments wherein the membership is reluctant to work with the pastor and there are many challenges dealing with race, sexism, and issues of color in the local church. Thus, as a researcher, I was directed to implement this project study. These distinct areas – teaching, education, nurturing, and empowering – laid a foundation for this doctoral project.

Teaching and Education

Teaching leaders of the church is fundamental to the growth of church leadership and ministry. Many people have gifts but identifying their practical gifts can be an asset to the way the institution functions. My experiences as a CC/CR pastor, working with different people from different ethnicities, utilizing different tools and techniques to enable learners to achieve their objectives, puts me in a distinctive position to lead. Theologically, my Master of Divinity degree has expanded my understanding of the Christian theology and leadership. I have acquired a breath of knowledge that enabled me to teach and train leaders of the local church to function in a holistic capacity as they lead their congregations.

Lack of proper education on core areas of the church values can be detrimental to the collective work of the church. One of the challenges I faced in my ministry was working with leaders in key church positions without any proper training, guidance or understanding. Faith leaders are called to serve others as their own. An awareness ministry project will equip faith leaders with not only spiritual tools but also means of self-efficacy on treating others with humility and respect as children of God without seeing the “other” as different.

God is challenging me to see how my self-understanding may be of good help to others to grow spiritually. Cultural competence is not the only way of learning, but I would add cultural humility[2] in the process. As a local church leader, I used my experiences to help find solutions to the challenges that many church leaders of color are facing.

Nurturing

There is nothing greater in ministry than nurturing leaders in any ministry context or institution**.** Challenges in my CC ministry directed me to find solutions through research. Studying the congregations that see CWOC as a mismatch exposes the weaknesses and the dilemma of those called to ministry to serve all God's people. Due to the laity's lack of proper nurturing, lack of cross-cultural awareness can cause harm to CWOC who are vulnerable and remain silent in their congregational leadership. As a result, CWOC tend to do things based on their instinct. There is lack of interest in trying new things because they feel insecure in their ministry. Nurturing laity and listening to CWOC will create confidence in working and respecting one another's culture and space. It is a challenge to have vibrant leaders in church positions as many who could help lead the congregation feel they do not have enough knowledge or skills to be in church leadership positions. Thus, it becomes a challenge for CWOC to handle all that is required in their ministry setting leading to vulnerability of ineffective leadership.

The fear that "outsiders" will come and change their customs or traditions is one reason to nurture the congregants. I have worked and nurtured many people in both my

---

[2] Cultural humility is the language used that can stop people from expressing themselves.

health profession and the community. The skills obtained from my personal corporate business, the experience from my health care profession, and the experience through contextual ministry helped address these challenges. Nurturing and working with people one-on-one is a proven tool to undercut fear in people who are good leaders and yet they fear because they are not comfortable with a leader of a divergent culture. Starting conversations will get the dialogues started in the local church while leading to Christian nurturing in CC/CR ministry.

Empowering

Pastors are called to nurture and empower those believers who want to follow Jesus and make disciples of Jesus Christ. There is a difference on the empowerment provided to white clergy women than provided to many CWOC congregations. White clergy pastors who are viewed to be a good fit to serve better than the CWOC. They are appointed to mega churches and are well financed; many do not encounter any financial issues. Unlike women of color who tend to be appointed to small rural areas where change is a new language to learn. As such, this process creates division, misunderstandings, and pushback due to lack of unawareness and openness to a diversified ministry.

Context of the Ministry

The dominant mosaic group in the Michigan Conference is White clergymen and clergywomen serving in suburban setting regions with average to big sized membership in well-to-do thriving churches. Below, I will capture the racial disparities in the

Michigan Conference of the UMC of clergywomen gathered from the adopted form the conference statistician report in 2022. The Michigan Annual Conference has a history of CC/CR pastoral appointments represented in about sixty settings.[3] Contemporarily, the leadership is becoming more intentional about addressing the nuances of these appointments. Intentional listening is involved; however, the educational piece of solving conflict is still lacking in its shared ministry.

According to the statistical report of the Michigan Annual Conference, local church data for 2022 records a total population of clergy being 1,187. The male clergy total is 961, and total clergywomen is 220, based on the given clergy statistics in Michigan Area Conference.[4] According to the statistics, the conference estimates clergywomen ethnicity as White clergy women totals seventy-three percent, Black clergywomen as eight percent, Asian clergy women as five percent, Hispanic clergy women totals two percent, Native clergywomen below one percent, multiracial clergy women below one percent, and others (those who did not declare their ethnicity) totals twelve percent.[5]

These figures played a role in understanding the context area. Notably, there are fewer clergywomen of color than white women clergy. There are just as many White churches with fewer White pastors to cover them. As a result, the CWOC are appointed in cross-cultural churches that consist of the White population in the congregation.

---

[3] David A. Bard, "Mourning Dancing," Michigan Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church, 4th Session, vol. 2, ed. Joy A. Barret (Traverse City, MI: February 2023), 113.

[4] David A. Bard, "Mourning Dancing," Michigan Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church, 4th Session, vol. 2, ed. Joy A. Barret (Traverse City, MI: February 2023), 113.

[5] David A. Bard, "Mourning Dancing," Michigan Annual Conference, The United Methodist Church, 4th Session, vol. 2, ed. Joy A. Barret (Traverse City, MI: February 2023), 250-388.

During this time of writing, the Michigan Conference is divided into nine districts, supervised by district superintendents. The districts include Central Bay District, East Winds, Greater Detroit, Greater Southwest, Heritage-Michigan, Midwest, Northern Skies, and Northern Waters.

Major neighboring cities like Ann Arbor, Jackson, Howell, Grass Lake, Lansing, Grand Rapids, and Marquette are all White suburban areas. A conference with many White churches consisting of old-age congregants in each area is left to use CWOC to serve those churches, and many of the congregants are not used to such cross-cultural or racial appointments.

Diversity is another factor that determines who lives in the neighborhood. According to the census in my context area, White alone is 95.2 %.[6] Black or African American alone is percent 0.9 %. American Indian and Alaska native alone is percent 0.00 %. And Asian alone is percent 0.2 %. Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone is percent 0.00 %. Two or more races are 3.2 %. Hispanic or Latino is 1.9 %.[7] This data highlights that the neighborhood of my context ministry overwhelmingly consists of a race of White people. As such, the region is not well diversified which is a reason for addressing the issue of cultural competence in the congregation while bridging the gap and opening doors for other cultures. Further, there are no young men coming to church. Becoming an inclusive church may trigger the young men to join the church.

---

[6] United States Census Bureau, QuickFacts, Chelsea, City, Michigan, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/chelseacitymichigan/HSG445220.

[7] United States Census Bureau, QuickFacts, Chelsea, City, Michigan, https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/chelseacitymichigan/HSG445220.

The mission of United Methodist Church is, "To make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world."[8] And the mission of North Lake UMC, my homebased church is, "to provide a Center in the community where people can gather to live out the example of Jesus Christ."[9] The church is called to be an open center for all to come in and experience worship while embracing the community togetherness, love and compassion as expressed by Jesus's love for all people, even by nourishing them (John 6:1-14). This mission can be met at this ministry center, but the congregation is still to meet the requirements of a center that functions like Jesus's model. The congregation must open and be diverse. It needs to have a strategic planning to reach out and create ministries that can attract people of all ages, races, and ethnicities.

In my present ministry, clergy has been assigned responsibilities that can help grow a church. As clergy, we follow a code of ethics instituted by the General Board of the United Methodist Church.[10] According to the *Book of Discipline* of the UMC, responsibilities and duties of licensed and ordained pastors are defined in a fourfold ministry: (1) Word - lead in worship, read and teach the Scriptures, and engage the people in study and witness. (2) Sacrament - to administer sacraments of baptism and the Last Supper of the Lord according to Christ's ordinances. Also, as a pastor I am to prepare the parents and sponsors before baptizing infants or children and instruct them concerning the significance of baptism and their responsibilities for the Christian training of the baptized child while encouraging reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant and

---

[8] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016), 275.

[9] "Mission, vision, and values," North Lake United Methodist Church.

[10] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275.

renewal of the baptismal vows at different stages of life.[11] I am to explain the meaning of the Lord's Supper and to encourage regular participation as a means of grace to grow in faith and holiness. This is a broad spectrum of duties to be performed. (3) Order the church - to be the administrative officer of the local church and to assure that the organizational concerns of the congregation are adequately supplied for. To be able to give pastoral support, guidance, and training to the lay leadership, equipping them to fulfill the ministry duties to which they are called.[12]

Further, as a pastor, I am to give oversight to the educational programs of the church and encourage the use of the United Methodist literature and media while being responsible for organizational faithfulness, goal setting, planning and evaluation and service.[13] In addition, I am to serve in the local church and in extension ministries in witness and service of Christ's love and justice.[14] I am also called (4), to be of Service - ensure faithful transmission of Christian faith while leading people in discipleship and evangelistic outreach that others might come to know Christ and follow him.[15] Moreover, I am to counsel persons with personal, ethical, or spiritual struggles while performing the ecclesial acts of marriage and burial.[16] I am assigned to perform the marriage ceremony after due council with both parties being involved and following the laws of the state and

---

[11] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

[12] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279

[13] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

[14] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

[15] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

[16] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

the rules of the United Methodist Church.[17] Reflecting on these job responsibilities, ministry is structured and measured by the top leadership of the general church.

Most importantly, I am called to visit the homes of the congregants and the community, especially among the sick, homebound, aged, imprisoned, and others in need. I am also to join ecumenical shared ministries and one or more local congregations of other Christian traditions.[18] These are broad areas of activities and responsibilities for one single leader. To succeed, one needs to be organized and teach laity and faith leaders so that they can assist in some areas as a shared ministry. Leadership comes with a lot of responsibilities. I am to model and promote faithful financial stewardship and to encourage giving as a spiritual discipline by teaching the biblical principles of giving as found in the scripture. This element of service will work perfectly if there are skills and understanding on stewardship in the lens of communication. Further, I am to lead a congregation in fulfillment of its mission through full and faithful payment of all apportioned ministerial support, administrative, and benevolent funds while caring for all church records.[19] The local church financial obligations is a huge stake if CWOC are in challenging roles. I am tasked to certify the accuracy of all financial, membership, and any other reports given by the local church to the annual conference for use in apportioning costs back to the church.[20]

---

[17] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

[18] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

[19] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279

[20] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline*, 275-279.

Because pastoral ministries are broad, challenges will always be inevitable. In my work, I must set parameters to name and identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) that come with the ministry. Analyzing and being willing to assume supervisory responsibilities within the connection and leading the congregation in racial and ethnic entity can be a challenge. My ministry identifies using ecological frames[21] which can enable us to understand the complex environment and broad range of individual and cultures within the congregation. This means studying the congregation and communities will help identify the importance of diversity and inclusion that is vital for any church that needs to thrive. My context lacks inclusivity, and my goal is to find ways to bridge the gap. Other churches around are all inclusive. We have people from all spheres of the world. But when it comes to my context, the congregation remains all white, without youth or young adults, and whose beliefs are only woven in what they know. To be a servant leader one must embody the teachings of Jesus' servant ministries and give diligent pastoral leadership in ordering the life of the congregation for discipleship in the world. Conversely, this takes the initiative of welcoming all people in the ministry of Jesus Christ. Biblically, the Good Samaritan story can be a good example where disciples are ordered to make disciples of all nations for Jesus Christ which includes the love for a neighbor. The priest, the Levite, and the Samaritan all see a man who needs help and yet, only the Samaritan comes to the rescue of the man who is robbed while the priest and the Levite pass without help (Luke 10-25-

[21] Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, eds. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 14-15.

37). This speaks loudly to being inclusive. We are called to be each other's neighbor. My contextual ministry will have to be receptive and be each other's keeper and neighbor.

I am enthusiastic to build the work of Christ through teaching and nurturing. When we share and train leaders and pastors adequately, there is a sense of peace and collaboration in those congregations where sharing cultural norms, while at the same time listening to other cultures, creates harmony. Lack of shared cultural beliefs creates misconceptions and fear of the unknown among people of the Christian community.

Reckoning the broad assignments in pastoral ministry, I am becoming a beacon of change that can empower others to see through the lens of inclusiveness. My passion is to be a planning and empowering vessel to others so that they can serve the Lord. The process and the culture frames[22] can help with the understanding of contextual ministry. Servanthood is for all who are ready to learn and carry the cross. But until those called to serve are equipped, they will watch from a distance and leave all the work for one clergy who in turn face burn-out presenting a halt to the ministry. Having served in various leadership settings, I understand the importance of both clergy and laity participation in ministry. Reflecting on this project, the Scripture that comes to my mind is Luke 10:1-12, where Jesus sends the disciples to the field where all are called to participate in the royal priesthood.

My professional experience is broad and diverse. It exemplifies the model in leadership setting which has exposed me in more initiative-taking ways as a trusted leader and as a result, it creates an impact on my ministry model. I have grown by separating feelings from emotions and this kind of learning creates a guided rational

---

[22] Ammerman, Carroll, Dudley, and McKinney, *Studying Congregations,* 14-15.

thinking of developing core values in ministry. As a leader, the Holy Spirit must lead one to know the differentiation in ministry. Working together and holding each leader, pastor, or laity accountable must be done in the form of a covenant to each other which not only creates peace and understanding but also opens communication and growth to area religious institutions.

Despite all the achievements I earned in my lifetime, there are still challenges in my ministry setting and studying the congregation I serve can be the ultimate place of encounter to address the challenges. I have encountered the issue of self- identification and perceived as the "other." Serving in a cross-cultural congregation sometimes can be a challenge and lonely especially if there is not much cultural awareness of the "other." It requires learning how to set boundaries. Cultural differences make things difficult to meet the desired goals of ministry. However, change is inevitable in an aging congregation that is resistant to new norms. I have observed the congregants become insecure when introducing innovative ideas. A mention of encouraging young families to be included in ministry makes the old age feel insecure and anxious. The older congregants feel their traditions will be wiped away by the vibrant contemporary upcoming baby-boomers or Gen Z dealing with a congregation that has no interest in growing its membership but just wants to maintain what it has so far is a threat to the growth of the church. Lack of young families and the cry for the pastor to grow the church membership alone is such a delicate theory. A church can be of social norms and at the same time be inclusive and open for a new feat. The culture frame and process frame are stagnant.[23] People grow in wisdom by learning the Word of God. In this space,

---

[23] Ammerman, Carroll, Dudley, and McKinney, *Studying Congregations,* 14-15.

Bible study is not a priority. There is a cultural shift from the original church in 1800-1900 period where studying the Bible was a priority. Case in point is how John Wesley formed classes for laity to study the Scriptures. The practices have been eroded away and much of the traditions have been lost due to lack of interest in learning more about the stories of Jesus Christ in the pristine environment. The issue of accepting all people and allowing ministry to be for all people is a challenge in the ministry setting either because of lack of knowledge or because of unwillingness to adopt new ways of ministry that can help the church to thrive.

Assessing, planning, implementing, and training can create knowledge to those in leadership positions to practice something new that they have never imagined. Albert Outler speaks to John Wesley's sermon, "The One Thing Needful." Outler speaks to the infinite difference of the end which humanity pursues.[24] This might fairly infer that for all that is given to humanity placed on earth, the Creator demands to be glorified with our whole body, soul, mind. In the image of God, humanity ought to love one another. The needful thing (Luke 10:42) becomes the text John Wesley embraces for humanity to use entirely when a stranger is viewed in a part of the world and its inhabitants

Developing the Synergy

For my synergy, I explored an "Intercultural Encounter: A Model Journey to Healing in Community of Diversity and Inclusiveness." Throughout history, religious faith has played a significant role in shaping the course of my daily life, and so, it is these

---

[24] John Wesley, "The One Thing Needful," In *John Wesley's Sermon: An Anthropology*, ed. Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 34-35.

nuances with the story of religious group within the communities I served that have boosted my professional development.

A case scenario below helps to describe my ministerial skills and interest. When I arrived at Nardin Park UMC for my internship (cross-racial church), I was excited to learn from both the laity and clergy. I examined programs that were in place and discovered that although laity participated in other programs, they did not participate in worship at all. This was a contrast from my home church, Second Grace, where there was ministry shared opportunity. I wondered why laity were not participating in worship service. I discovered that many of them felt unprepared and untrained to lead worship. This was an opportunity for me to design a model that would include laity to serve as liturgists in worship services. Many parishioners enrich their Christian experience by preparing the church for worship or playing a more active role during the services. The experience and passion that led to a successful training is what I envisioned to bring to my contextual ministry in the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church.

The General Nature and Content of the Project

This project was designed and sought to,

- Help CWOC facilitate healing in the life of the local community in coordinating and providing practical experiences by celebrating and strengthening the CCRC ministry.
- Equip with tools and resources explaining how spiritual growth transcend through serving in the local church while embracing all people of distinct cultures.
- Guide CWOC, bishops, superintendents, and local community on how to plan and prepare for CCCR pastors while sharing the stories on Jesus Christ.

To test this hypothesis, I engaged clergywomen who are serving CCCR appointments.

My excitement was embracing that leadership I bring to the local church which is a model of the love of Christ to ministry. If CWOC are equipped with tools and resources, they will be able to serve their communities without fear of each other. This has become a forum to network and explain how spiritual growth comes through serving in communities that are not diverse. All parties engaging in planning, leading, nurturing, and empowering will be an asset to a community that is isolated and divided.

The learning experience for the project tested if people of a varied culture are equipped with tools and are well trained, could come together, learn, and lead effectively, respecting the other's culture and traditions. If Jesus Christ, whose identity, ministry, death, resurrection, and reign brings healing and transformation to those who believe, then our communities must seek the truth of salvation and live as one body of Christ.

Experiencing the love of God through Christ and the Holy Spirit motivates Christians to share their overflowing joy and gratitude with others, spreading the good news throughout the world and growing the church, which is Christ's body on earth. In rural communities, social isolation and loneliness are social ills correlated with physical and mental health issues, which the church as the body of Christ is uniquely poised to address. People and communities need healing and interaction. To learn, they need Jesus Christ, the great healer. People best encounter Christ through relationships in the community. As a doctoral student, called to rural ministry, and as a nutrition expert in the health field, I am equipped to engage and empower others to become healthier in a holistic way. Also, I am called to serve as a witness, facilitator, and community-builder for Christ. This project created a unique ministry model as an extension of the local

church, seeking to grow the body of Christ through unconventional means. I provided holy conversations from a Christian perspective, and by engaging leaders, church members, and other locals in opportunities for fellowship and formation together, including small groups of a wide variety of forms. The groups participated in prayer, testimony, sharing experience, scripture, discussion, and holy conversation which helped mobilize CWOC in outwardly focused missional service.

Conclusion

Through my journey encounters, preparation and support remain core values for ministry. The ability to improve the ministry called for research needs assessment to be evaluated allowing openness to change in the twenty-first century. As a pastor for the past five years in ministry, I advocated for teaching and empowering both lay clergy to be open minded so that they can hear God's still voice (Psalm 46:10). I love to tell the stories of Jesus Christ, and his love is to all people of all races and ages. My ministry life has connected me with other faith leaders to proclaim the good news. As faith leaders, we are called to help others grow spiritually, emotionally, and physically. A project based on awareness and cultural identity equips faith leaders and clergywomen with spiritual tools as well as cultural competency and cultural humility. Further, it provides basic knowledge while offering sound and biblical foundation toward helping others achieve their spiritual formation and support.

Conversely, this is where I see the mission of Jesus Christ making intellectual and disciplined disciples in the field as there is plenty to harvest but few laborers. My passion then lies in training and equipping while resourcing local church leaders to lead

congregations into these intercultural encounters. My great desire has allowed and let the Holy Spirit use and breath on me freshness to become a beacon of hope to others. For I am created to speak what I seek as I declare what is to be (Isaiah 45:21). My conscious belief is that when we trust and obey God, anything is possible with God. As we enter the next chapter, we will connect life experiences to a specific text in the Biblical Foundations that Paul has laid out in preparation to those called to serve.

CHAPTER TWO

BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Women in ministry have always worked behind the scenes to booster ministry around the globe. From the biblical view we observe several women who stood up for leadership roles. A case in point is Esther, Deborah, Elizabeth, and Mary — some of the entrusted women in the biblical narratives that stood up for leadership roles. Women in ministry who are supported and nurtured in leadership become models of the patriarchs throughout the sacred text. With increased women of color joining ministry, it means more preparation and support will be required. Developing cross-cultural relationships stems from a sincere experience of mutual respect across the ethnic and economic divides that confront church culture. Empowering diverse leadership creates an understanding of cultural competence, and in turn, it creates and promotes the spirit of inclusion. The Apostle Paul was one leader who embraced the spirit of inclusion when he called for Pheobe to deliver the letter to the Roman church. The goal was not simply unity and credibility but rather mutual understanding of a culturally diverse church to express the love of God in pursuit of social justice and integral spiritual transformation. Richard Niebuhr, in his book, *Christ & Culture,* writes, “It would be false to interpret all this in eschatological terms. As if Paul looked upon human culture from the point of view of

time when it would be judged at a final assize, and a new era of life would be inaugurated."[1] This statement speaks to the culture of Christ which echoes the theme of love to the neighbor and the embracing of all cultures to ministry. I agree with Niebuhr's point as he emphasized the relevance and definitive treatment of the ways that Christianity and culture interact today. He seems to be addressing the rejection of a cultural society that creates separation in ministry. It is to this understanding that we move to the selected text that tested our project hypothesis.

The scripture chosen for this project comes from Romans 16:1-20. The text is divided into three sections. The first part focuses on the commendation of Phoebe (16:1-2). The second section concentrates on Paul's greetings to the Roman Christians (16:3-16), and the last section focuses on Paul's warning, promise, and a prayer for grace (16:17-20). Throughout the study, we explored and investigated the themes of obedience, faith, solidarity, love, mutuality, and true teachings of the word of God.

> I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well. Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus, and who risked their necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first convert in Asia for Christ. Greet Mary, who has worked very hard among you. Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was. Greet Ampliatus, my beloved in the Lord. Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ, and my beloved Stachys. Greet Apelles, who is approved in Christ. Greet those who belong to the family of Aristobulus. Greet my relative Herodion. Greet those in the Lord who belong to the family of Narcissus. Greet those workers in the Lord, Tryphaena and Tryphosa. Greet the beloved Persis, who has worked hard in the Lord. Greet Rufus, chosen in the Lord; and greet his mother — a mother to me also. Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers and sisters who are with them. Greet Philologus, Julia,

---

[1] Richard H. Niebuhr, *Christ & Culture* (New York, NY: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001), 162.

> Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them. Greet one another with a holy kiss. All the churches of Christ greet you. I urge you, brothers, and sisters, to keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and offenses, in opposition to the teaching that you have learned; avoid them. For such people do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the simple-minded. For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I want you to be wise in what is good and guileless in what is evil. The God of peace will shortly crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you (Rom. 16:1-20).[2]

Outline: Romans 16:1-20

Romans 16:1-20 is the framework which Paul concludes his letter, and he is ready to move to the next phase of his mission. This chapter is not related to the previous chapter fifteen. It contains personalized messages (vv. 1-16) and gives a warning against heresy (vv. 17-20) to the churches, and a long ascription of praise[3] (vv. 25-27); but we will focus on (16:1-20). Paul is eager to send his emissary, the deacon Phoebe, to deliver the letter. Because the body of Romans has many "theological" outlines of the structure of the letter, the outline for the text selected will be our main focus.

The structure of the text known as the "greetings" can be split into three sections.

1. Commendation of Phoebe (16:1-2)
    a. Deacon Phoebe as a female emissary
    b. What was the purpose of Phoebe's selection?
2. Greetings to the Roman Christians (16:3-16)

---

[2] Romans 16:1-20, New Revised Standard Version. Unless otherwise noted, all scripture references in this document are from the NRSV.

[3] Cyril Edwin Blackman, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans. The Interpreters One-volume Commentary on the Bible Including the Apocrypha with General Articles*, ed. Charles M. Layman (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1971), 791-973.

a. Who are these, Romans Christians?

b. Why does Paul focus only on the Romans Christians?

c. What purpose does Paul have to continue issuing personal greetings?

3. A warning, a promise, and a prayer for Grace (16:17-20).

a. Why is Paul issuing a warning to the Roman Church?

b. Paul issued a promise to the Roman church

c. Paul concludes with doxology and grace.

Exegesis

Paul affirms over twenty-eight co-workers considering the culture of the time; ten women are identified and praised. Paul wants the reader to understand his role and the relationship sought to communicate with others. Clergywomen play a role in ministry just like their counterparts — men. They are sent to "foreign lands"[4] and respond to their duties with respect and obedience. It can be recalled that during the first-century context, we find evidence of women participation in ministry. Mary Rose D'Angelo, in the *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, finds the role of Martha and Mary (John 11:1-12, Luke 10:38-42) intriguing as they take on a new meaning to ministry.[5] We can view them as women who are ordered to ministry in the New Testament in different contexts. The role and place in women's work and their theological concerns of their works exemplify that women can be partners in communication and can exemplify leadership in ministry

[4] Places of unknown. Places where migrants visit without any history of the place.

[5] Mary Rose D'Angelo, "Women Partners in the New Testament," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 65-86.

by serving God who elects them. A case in point is Phoebe who takes her role seriously and agrees to deliver an important message in the form of a letter to the Romans.

Commendation of Phoebe (1-2)

Paul introduces the readers to a servant woman — Phoebe. He has selected her to become his emissary. Doubtless, she is the carrier of the letter. Paul wrote, "I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a deacon of the church at Cenchreae, so that you may welcome her in the Lord as is fitting for the saints and help her in whatever she may require from you, for she has been a benefactor of many and of myself as well" (vv.1-2).

Deacon Phoebe as a Female Emissary

In her article "Making Peace with Paul," Julie R. Frady asserts that Paul commended (*synistēmi*) Phoebe to the Christians in Rome.[6] Fredy records, "Then, he called her a deacon (*diakonon*) of the church in Cenchreae."[7] The word *diakonos* is referred to as being a "servant" or a "minister" of the risen Christ. The term would apply to any Christian. In fact, we know that every Christian is viewed as a servant. Next, Paul instructed the Roman believers to welcome (*prosdexēsthe*)[8] Phoebe and give her any help that she needed because she had been a *benefactor.* She herself has also been a benefactor of many.[9] This leads us into the word *prostatis.* The word comes from a verb which

---

[6] Julie R. Frady, "Making Peace with Paul, CBE International," *Lethbridge News*, September 9, 1896, 14-15, https://www.jstor.org/stable/community.31880562.

[7] Frady, "Making Peace with Paul," 14-15.

[8] Frady, "Making Peace with Paul," 14-15.

[9] Frady, "Making Peace with Paul," 14-15.

means "(1) care for, give aid to, or (2) direct, preside over."[10] Scholar Douglas Moo expostulate that if Paul was applying the used verbs, then he might have been implying that Phoebe was a "helper" of many Christians[11] (cf. NASB, RSV translations).

As Douglas J. Moo comments:

> Paul seems to use the verb only to mean 'direct,' 'preside over.' Noting this, some recent scholars have argued that Paul intends to characterize Phoebe as a 'leader' of the church. But it is difficult to conceive how Phoebe would have had the opportunity to be a 'leader' of Paul. Moreover, the fact that Paul designates her as the leader 'of many' rather than as the leader of 'the church' (contrast v. 1) suggests that the term here does not denote an official, or even semi-official, position in the local church. The best alternative, then, is to give to *prostatis* the meaning that it often has in secular Greek: 'patron,' 'benefactor.' A 'patron' was one who came to the aid of others, especially foreigners, by providing housing and financial aid and by representing their interests before local authorities. Cenchreae's status as a busy seaport would make it imperative that a Christian in its church take up this ministry on behalf of visiting Christians. Phoebe, then, was probably a woman of high social standing and some wealth, who put her status, resources, and time at the services of traveling Christians, like Paul, who needed help and support. Paul now urges the Romans to reciprocate.[12]

Paul endorses Phoebe as a sister, a fellow Christian, a servant, and a deaconess. Presumably, we can argue that during Paul's time in the church, he saw women as a feat to serve in the church and Paul's intention was to be inclusive in his ministry.[13] This introduction sets a tone for those Christians. Paul speaks of the deacon, Phoebe, who is to be received with love and respect. Phoebe is a woman in Corinth who is powerful and known in ministry. In retrospect, Paul seems to understand the role of women in ministry,

---

[10] Moo, *The Letter to the Romans,* 931.

[11] Moo, *The Letter to the Romans,* 931.

[12] Moo, *The Letter to the Romans,* 931-932.

[13] Cyril Edwin Blackman, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans, The Interpreters One-volume Commentary on the Bible Including the Apocrypha with General Articles,* ed. Charles M. Layman (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 971), 791-973.

especially in a foreign land, a space with distinct cultural values. Women are sent to serve but they could be received differently compared to their counter-partners who are males. Paul persuades the readers that Phoebe is a trusted servant in the community and deserves a warm welcome.

Julie R. Frady writes, "When Paul called Phoebe a *diakonos* in the church at Cenchreae, he was not praising her 'spirit of servanthood' to the Roman Christians. He was telling them that Phoebe held an official, titled position in her church. This meant that she had been vetted in her character and doctrine, and she had authority to preach."[14] Paul wanted to make it clear that Phoebe is a trusted leader, and they ought to receive her without discourse. The question then is why would this be important to the Roman Christians' knowledge and understanding of Phoebe? Perhaps Paul might be aware of what he said about women before. He had written controversial texts about women and perhaps he recalls what he wrote in I Timothy and I Corinthians about women. Paul had condemned women's teaching and leadership. He realizes the controversial "talk" must be cleared before sending Phoebe to Rome. Paul realizes that he had a relationship with Phoebe, and he needed to affirm Phoebe to be viewed as a trusted woman leader.

What Was the Purpose of Phoebe's Selection?

Paul had a purpose for selecting Phoebe: "I commend to you our sister Phoebe" and "a deacon of the church at Cenchreae" (v.1). Paul understands that he needed a persuasive woman of character who could deliver an important letter on his behalf to the churches in

[14] Frady, "Making Peace with Paul," 15.

Rome to explain tough and complex theologies and at the same time collect large sum of money for him.[15] Conversely, this understanding reveals the power of women, and the confidence Paul had in Phoebe. Multi-cultural women leave their native lands to novel places seeking for social, economic and justice in foreign lands. Phoebe held that position to visit a foreign community, forge for peace, and prepare the way for Paul who is still to visit the Roman churches.

Douglas Moo has an astounding argument as to why Phoebe is being the selected servant to deliver the letter. He writes,

> Paul's purpose in commending Phoebe is, he wants the Roman Christians to 'receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints.' 'Receiving' includes of course welcoming Phoebe into Fellowship. But it would also mean assisting her to find lodging, food, and the like.[16]

This is understandable that Phoebe is the assigned person to deliver the letter. It was believed in the ancient times letters of commendation were commonly used.[17] This suggests that travelling and delivering public information was not unusual. Paul sees Phoebe as an ordinary believer and assistant who can deliver the letter to the Roman Christians.

---

[15] Frady, "Making Peace with Paul," 16.

[16] Moo, "The Letter to the Romans," 930.

[17] Moo, "The Letter to the Romans," 929.

Greetings to the Roman Christians (3-16)

The word "greetings" symbolizes solidarity and affection among those that served the Lord together in love.[18] It is a salutation address of acceptance. The lengthy list of greetings in Romans16 alerts us that there are five house churches in Rome. Evidently, the dissimilar people represented different churches which brings us to the intercultural encounter theme of love. Some scholars identify this as a migration mission.[19] Paul states, "Greet Prisca and Aquila, who work with me in Christ Jesus" (v. 3). The reference to Prisca and Aquila identifies the first church groups (cf. vv.3-5).[20] In the comment "Greet also the church in their house" (v. 5), we see a reference in v. 10. There are more references to other families in Paul's greetings: to "the family of Aristobulus" in v. 11; "to the family of Narcissus" in v. 14; and several other greetings to brothers and sisters that are followed with another group in v. 15. Lastly, he acknowledges: "and all the saints who are with them." Paul has a multitude of saints, friends, and co-workers. The greetings could also signify that Paul is not isolated but rather he is surrounded by many companions and trusted Christians. The word "greet" appears sixteen times in Paul's address which is an indication that Paul is embracing a social relationship among friends.

Paul is addressing individual women in the Roman churches (Phoebe, Prisca, Junia, Mary, Persis, Rufus's mother, Tryphena, and Tryphosa). It is a remarkable characteristic of greetings to these phenomena women. Priscilla in found in Acts 18;

---

[18] Thomas R. Schreiner, *Romans*, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 1998), 763.

[19] Samuel Escobar, "Refugees: A New Testament Perspective," *Transformation* 35, no. 2 (April 2018):102-108, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/90025311.

[20] Samuel Escobar, "Refugees: A New Testament Perspective," *Transformation* 35, no. 2 (April 2018):103, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/90025311.

sometimes she is also addressed by the name of Prisca (2 Tim. 4:19); she is a well-known person to Paul. The main purpose of greetings expresses love that was embraced in the early Christian community (cf. John 13:31-35).[21] What roles could they have played in Paul's ministry to the point of being greeted individually? In verse 3, Paul greets Prisca and her husband Aquila who are believed to have worked with him in tent-making (cf. Acts 18:2-3), 1 Cor. 16:19, 1 Tim. 4:19). In 1 Cor. 16:19, we learn the couple had enough wealth and migrated from Rome to Corinth. Perhaps Paul was thinking of the social and economic status of the couple and how their status might impact his ministry. We are not sure. But we can just speculate ministry requires financial resources to thrive and Paul was paving way to get the well-to-do couple to assist financially. In addition, having people who understand Roman culture might be of great support to him (Paul) as he begins his mission in Rome. I will explain further below on this gist.

In her article "Women in the Greetings of Romans 16:1-16," Susan Matthew writes, "the relevance of hierarchical and egalitarian cultural models as static and asserts that Greco-Roman cultural patterns opening leadership positions to women of wealth, status, prestige, authority, and power were unexceptional."[22] This bolstered how women are regarded in ministry. Paul, in a sense, practices countercultural norms and he is looking for a diversified ministry. A theme of mutuality could be what Paul is advocating for in the Romans 16 passage. Paul's greetings are extended to all those in the house. "Greet also the church in their house. Greet my beloved Epaenetus, who was the first

---

[21] Schreiner, *Romans*, 763.

[22] Susan Mathew, "Women in the Greetings of Romans 16:1-16: A Study of Mutuality and Women's Ministry in the Letter to the Romans," *The Journal of Religion* 96, no. 2 (April 2016): 284-285.

convert in Asia for Christ" (v. 5). All different greetings are diverse representing different houses of Christian worship.

Why Does Paul Focus only on the Roman Christians?

We might not have a great answer to this question. The order of greetings seems as if Paul is greeting those he knew first. He mentions the co-workers in Achaia and Asia: Prisca, Aquila, Epaenetus, and then follows with those that were the first missionaries in Rome: Mary, Andronicus, and Junia are greeted in vs 6. Paul acknowledges Andronicus and Junia for being in prison with him (v. 7) as well as Herodion. Then in v.11, Paul mentions the kinship people who could be Jewish. Scholars contend that Phoebe, Narcissus, Ampliatus, and Urbanus belong to the Gentile origin.[23] These are the kinship family that he salutes and respects. Paul mutually accepts them and acknowledges them. Paul's pastoral letter is seen as an initiative to encourage them to love one another as brothers and sisters in God's church. Paul is setting a tone and desires an environment of mutual acceptance. He writes, "Welcome one another, therefore just as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God" (Rom. 15:7). The theme of solidarity is detected. By Paul pointing to receiving each other in a way Christ would do, Paul emphasizes, "deposition of cultural difference that the saints are to encounter"[24] (cf. Rom. 14:1-6).[25]

---

[23] Samuel Escobar, "Refugees: A New Testament Perspective," *Transformation* 35, no. 2 (April 2018): 104, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/90025311.

[24] Samuel Escobar, "Refugees: A New Testament Perspective," *Transformation* 35, no. 2 (April 2018): 104, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/90025311.

[25] Samuel Escobar, "Refugees: A New Testament Perspective," *Transformation* 35, no. 2 (April 2018): 104, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/90025311.

F. F. Bruce comments,

> Paul was certainly aware of difference in attitude and practices which might set up tensions if brotherly consideration were not exercised; this is why he urges all the groups so earnestly to give one another the same welcome as they had all received from Christ 'for the glory of God'' (Rom.15:7). Paul's missionary strategy as outlined in chapter 15 includes actions and teachings to foster mutual acceptance between Jews and Gentiles.[26]

Clergywomen are likely to be treated as the "other" in the mainstream church. Although many appear to originate from cultures that can diversify and unite the church, many who see them as the "other" or the "unqualified" are quick not to accept them or their cultural values. Most churches are disintegrating because they have failed to hone into Christ teachings. The state of brotherhood and sisterhood is causing division among the houses. This hard-core question brings us to the ethnic conflict between Asian American, African American, Native American, and the majority "tribe"— the White American. The White Americans seem to be in a secular environment to be led by a different "tribe,"[27] yet Paul reminds the "tribe" to avoid cultural indifferences that could divide them (No Jew or Gentile in the house).

The theologian Miroslav Volf has written and reflected on the difficult social ills that cause disintegration in the church such as cruelty, lack of respect, social status, and lack of humanity that defines the church of Christ. The question of inclusion of those seen as of lower status, for example – clergywomen or race status – is only but a

---

[26] F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit* (United Kingdom: The Paternoster Press, 1977), 389.

[27] A tribe is a group of people who believe in same values or customs.

mechanism of exclusion.[28] Time and time again, this divide is what Paul is against. He calls for embrace and the love of one another.

In his book, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation*, Volf Miroslav writes,

> A genuinely Christian reflection on social issues must be rooted in the self-giving love of the divine Trinity as manifested on the cross of Christ; all the central themes of such reflection will have to be thought through from perspective of the self-giving of God. This book seeks to explicate that divine self-donation may mean for the construction of identity and for the relationship with the other under the condition of enmity.[29]

I agree with Volf's sentiments that the process of embracing is not only because the leader must look like the one being led but to embrace the knowledge and the rich cultural experience that will diversify the church and create rich intercultural history. Paul was clear in Rom 15:7 when he said, "welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you."

Another examination is how Paul knew all these follow Christians that he was greeting. Notably, scholars agree that Paul had lived in Ephesus for three years (Acts 20:31) where he spent time writing the letter. Perhaps he encountered many of the saints he is sending greetings to. Paul seemed to have a clear knowledge of the roles these individuals played in the church. Moreover, another theory suggests that these brethren might have been Romans who had migrated to Ephesus and now they have relocated back in Rome.[30] Paul first met Priscilla in Corinth. (We will refer her to as Prisca in this

---

[28] Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996), 25.

[29] Volf, *Exclusion and Embrace,* 25.

[30] Blackman, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*, 793.

document). Prisca and her husband were Jews who left Italy by the decree of the Roman Emperor Claudius who commanded all Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:1-3**).** What purpose does Paul have to continue issuing personal greetings? According to Schneider, numerous greetings that Paul is offering confirms the thesis that Paul was very much aware of the circumstances in the Roman churches then. Thus, the mentioning of individuals would be of greater value to the churches in the Roman community since good and positive characters would be established.[31]

A Warning, A Promise, and a Prayer for Grace (17-20)

Why is Paul Issuing a Warning to the Roman Church?

Paul had addressed the issue of sharing a "meal table" with all Christians in his other letter, especially the Galatians. In Rom 6:17, there is a presupposition that the early Christians had a consensus in their teachings. Paul refers to the Gentiles and Jewish Christians in Romans 9:30 and 10:15, 17, 19-20. Arguably, these references place Paul and his ministry in a larger historical context.[32] Paul stands to make the Roman Christians "serve" and make his own Jewish people feel jealous hoping the Roman community would contribute as obedient saints.

---

[31] Schreiner, *Romans*, 763.

[32] Christoph W. Stenschke, "'Your Obedience is Known to All' (Rom 16:19): Paul's References to Other Christians and Their Function in Paul's Letter to the Romans," *Novum Testamentum* 57, Fasc. 3 (2015): 251-274.

The issue of Jews versus Gentiles was very much on Paul's mind. He was aware of the heresy, and he saw he had another opportunity to address the issue again. Paul seemed to be asking for an open inclusiveness and obedience in his ministry.

According to Blackman's commentary, he indicates that the issue of Jews and Gentiles and law versus gospel compelled him to publicize the letter by sending a copy to Ephesus for dissemination in Asia.[33] Preferably, this would support his mission in Rome (Rom1:7-15). Paul is aware of the heresy, and he warns the false teachers for not speaking the truth. His dilemma is the how to dismantle the false teachers and make them spread Christ's word truthfully.

Paul wrote, "We put our trust in Jesus Christ to be justified out of Faith and not works of Law" (Gal. 2:15-16). In Hays commentary, he states that Paul uses the phrases such as "even we Jews by birth have placed trust in Christ instead of the works of the law as a ground for justification."[34] Seemingly, Hays agrees that God's righteousness to human beings becomes achieved through justification. Galatians 3:1-5 not only uses the nonexistence of circumcision amongst Gentiles but also emphasizes the obvious results of the Spirit as a basis for their faith. Paul wants to underscore the question of trust, solidarity, and obedience. Drawing from this understanding, we can allude that Paul is presenting the proof, authority, and support for the rest of his letter to the Romans.

The theme of unity is in Paul's mind. Paul had experienced pushbacks with other communities such as time in Galatia and other regions like the Philippian community that

---

[33] Blackman, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans,* 791-973.

[34] Richard B. Hays, "The Letter to the Galatians, Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections," *Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, vol xi, ed. Jack A Keller, Jr. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2020), 237.

he covered in his ministry. He seemed to understand human nature of mixing the laws and the gospel. A good example is from his letter to Galatians. Let me expound by using an example from the letter of Galatians. The introduction in Galatians 3:1-5 is the first part of the probation section of the epistle (3:1; 4:31) that establishes credibility for the defense by a system of arguments. Paul presents the proof, authority, and support for the rest of his letter to the Galatians[35] (e.g., Gal 1:6-9; 5:7-12; Phil 1:18). However, the inquiry remains: why is Paul on offense in this short epistle? Perhaps, Paul oppositional references into his argument is of an antithetical identity.[36] He is seeking to bolster unity within the Roman church as he did in the Philippian community. Also, the argument could be this community has no experience of Judaism, but only the experience of the gospel as preached by Paul.

In Paul's letter to the Galatians, he is defending his position against Jewish-Christian missionaries[37] who are teaching the Gentiles that they must follow Jewish laws. Moreover, Paul was reinforcing the concept of belief and life in the Spirit. Since Paul experienced a pushback with the teachers in his ministry, he must be aware he could face the same resistance from the Romans. Again, we do not know which epistle came first but the themes seem to be collaborating.

> Paul Meyer in his review of Betz' commentary states, 'when they want to understand Paul's early life, his activity as a persecutor, or his calling, 1:18-1:24 offers a supplement to the travels of Paul as portrayed in Acts. 2:1-10 provides a source for the discussion of the Jerusalem council, and 2:11-14 supplies numerous

---

[35] Betz Dieter Hans, *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia* (Philadelphia, PA: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1989), 319-20.

[36] Robert A. Fringer, "The Antithetical Identity of the Philippian Opponents and Paul's Shaping of Eschatology Identity," *Aldersgate Papers* 11 (June 01): 95.

[37] Hays, *The Letter to the Galatians*, 184.

> possibilities for the reconstruction of the divisions within the earliest communities.[38]

Drawing from this quote, Paul recalls his fate in ministry. We need more review and research regarding Paul's mission to the communities he served. To understand Paul's intention more, scholars provide their insights on false teachers.

Augustine writes, "The apostle Peter would not have been rebuked if he had separated himself from Gentiles for fear of giving scandal to the Jews."[39] This argument seems to draw us into a different direction. It sounds like a proposal for the early fathers who want to stick to their Jewish identity. Augustine seems to argue that their way of life and identity matters. Arguably, to them, identity (Jew) is of crucial significance. Their attitude towards the Torah – (the Law of Moses, its teaching, and its practical applications) – in particular, circumcision and the dietary rules are their central symbols, and for Peter to act differently, he stands to be rebuked.

Is Paul using Peter as an example to caution the Romans? The question of being "insincere" triggers the lament of Peter's behavior. Paul's attack on Peter is a state of fear that the Gentiles will compel to be like Jews, something he warns the Romans to refrain from. Paul writes, "I urge you brothers and sisters to keep an eye on those who cause dissension and offenses, in opposition to the teaching you have learned, avoid them" (v. 17). Paul continues to elaborate that such people do not serve God exhaustively (v. 18). He is cautious about deceit and unwarranted teachings. Paul is of more solidarity than false teachings that might cause division. He leans on the theme of obedience. For

---

[38] Hans, *Galatians*, 319-20.

[39] Mark J. Edwards, *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, New Testament Vol. VIII, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, ed. Thomas C. Oden (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005), 27.

example, he makes the statement that the "obedience of the Romans is known to all" (v. 19). Paul returns to the phrase in Romans1:8 that "the faith of the Roman Christians is proclaimed throughout the world." In this case, Paul's presentation of the gospel compels an announcement of his ministry. The statement of *inclusio* is Paul's hope for a universal calling.[40]

Joseph Coleson writes,

> [A]ll creatures, as finite beings, require the mediation of place if they are to experience anything, including encounter with God or with one another. Our finite nature requires instruction and educational experience in holiness, universal.[41]

Drawing from this quote, it supports the dilemma Paul seems to address — division among God's loved children. Paul is rooting for unity among the people while indicating the themes of obedience, trust, unity, and love in telling the Gospel story.

Paul Issues a Promise to the Roman Church

Key phrases in this passage reveal that Paul is using a persuasive language of assurance. He introduces the phrase "holy kiss" (16:16) which could mean a sign of fraternity or a customary way of acknowledging each other with love (1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12, and 1 Thess 5:26). It could also be an assurance of working together and fully supporting one another. This could be evidence outside the Pauline circles. However, dating back to the early and second century, this word the "holy kiss" was prominent and

---

[40] Stenschke, "Your Obedience is Known to All," 267.

[41] Joseph Coleson, "Living Together as Daughters and Sons in God's already-but-not-yet world," *Aldersgate Papers* 9 (September 2011).

is used in the liturgy of the Lord Supper often.[42] Paul expresses appreciation for the Jewish Christian in both regions – Corinth or Rome – and he assures of his visibility and welcomes them all.

Paul seems to soften his tone. He writes, "For while your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, I want you to be wise in what good and guileless in what is evil" (v. 19). Paul understands their motives might be ingenuine, but they are best if they avoid evil. For Paul, he compels his argument that the victory of God over Satan is not in doubt (v. 20, cf. Phil., 3:18-19; Jude 17-25). The key phrase "your obedience is known to all" (v. 19) is a reference to other Christians — Jewish or Gentiles. The way they function will call for obedience throughout the Roman churches. Paul is a addressing a larger Christian community and he portrays himself as the spokesperson and a leader of faith in these larger communities in Rome.[43] According to Paul's argument, the Romans are obligated to welcome other members of their community (Rom12:13) as did Christians in Jerusalem as well as Christians in Macedonia and Achaia.

As the center of the New Testament, Paul utilizes the theme of obedience and solidarity to earn support. Participation is vital to the communities in Rome. The phrase "All the churches" signifies that no community stands alone. Since others have supported Paul in the past and in the present, the Romans are called to support him as well in the future (Rom 15:27). Thus, this is a vital call of participation for the Roman communities. Notably, from the *Novum Testamentum* article, the argument derived is, since the "Romans are widely known they have an excellent reputation to lose." Also, Paul "knows

---

[42] Blackman. *The Letter of Paul to the Romans,* 791-973.

[43] Stenschke, "Your Obedience is Known to All," 251-274.

and acknowledges the status and merits of the Roman Christians; he will be respectful in his dealings with them."[44]

In his article "Your Obedience is Known to All," Stenschke writes,

> For Paul, ecumenical dialogue within entity of individual Christians, congregations and churches is but the beginning of much more that is expected of them. The aspect of Paul's ecclesiology is an important reminder in a day and age where all *churches of Christ* are still divided not only by doctrine, rite, and liturgy, but also by difference in race, social status, income, and geographical distance.[45]

I agree with Stenschke's statement that today's churches need to be bold and embrace those elected by God to be of service (*Koinonia*) to the church. Leadership of clergywomen desires support, unity, and love. Paul understood that women servants might be treated differently than their male counterparts, but he also was concerned of those of a different origin and culture like Phoebe whom he commanded to be respected and be received warmly in Rome. The church's mission is to train, teach, love, and assist its leaders. The cross-cultural encounter in many institutions has raised numerous questions that speak to Paul's sentiments. Paul's use of the phrases "your obedience is known to all" (v.19), and "all churches of Christ" must function to love and not to discriminate or disobey. As for Paul, Christian fellowship and communion with God is for all Christians.

---

[44] Stenschke, "Your Obedience is Known to All," 251-274.

[45] Stenschke, "Your Obedience is Known to All," 251-274.

Paul Concludes with Doxology and Grace

Writing the words "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you" (v. 20b), Paul presents himself as an agent of peace in this larger body and its mediator. For the readers, the closing doxology presents and an impressive send off for Paul to the Christians. However, some scholars argue that some manuscripts have raised questions in the context it appears but also suggests it could be the work of second century unknown authorship.[46] Many scholars suggest it could well be the work of those who used the Pauline phraseology (Gal. 4:4; Eph. 3:9-11). As Paul concludes the Roman letter, his last word is one of the blessings. The argument is that his benediction reinforces his pivotal point. The "welcoming" of each other like Christ and the strength of God is for everyone. Whether Jew, or Gentile, male or female, slave, or master, are alike. And for that exemplification, he repeated that faithfulness is not for our own glory but to glorify God through Jesus Christ the only Savior (16:25-27).

Conclusion

The passage Romans 16:1-20 is fundamental to the chosen doctoral thesis and project. First, we have addressed special challenges linked to interpreting the Roman letter and specific elements of context. We investigated what information, evidence, or argument that seemed most compelling in the text. Second, the passage, Romans 16:1-20 explored ethical ramifications of women practices in the church and revealed how women are instrumental to serve in foreign lands, and still accomplish God's mission despite

---

[46] Blackman, *The Letter of Paul to the Romans*, 791-973.

their cultural identity. The text guided and supported content of the gathering of Christians ancient in-house churches in reference to the modern church focusing on basic asked questions explored in the matrix of the Christian church. Lastly, the text pericope helped to explain how Christian leadership as addressed by Paul in the social history of the early Christianity should be modeled in the modern church with unity, focus on women's roles, tools of gender analysis they employ, and the impact of the social locations they originate from.

In this chapter, we have explained to the reader how the issues of cross-cultural encounters intersect with the main issue of inclusion, cultural identity, the role of women in ministry. Succinctly, there is no "Jew or Gentile" in the name of Christ. Christian conferencing, according to Paul, is essential to invite all sisters and brothers together as a means of grace. Together we can study the scriptures and discuss how to apply them to our daily lives while holding each other accountable for living faithfully. Paul's work promotes mutuality and promotion of corporate togetherness of "the body of Christ." This is affirmed when we look at 1 Cor 11:11 as a key element to solve the puzzle of Pauline authorship. Although we notice women being degraded in 1 Tim. 2:13, Paul understands that the works of women is paramount in the ministry of the church. He has a changed heart and welcomes them.

Conversely, aspects of witness and teachings must be biblically sound, and the biblical foundations must overarch the desire for many to lead the church of Christ. The epistle to the Romans is very relevant in the churches around the world. Intercultural openness in Christ is necessary to announce the Gospel to all nations. As societies deal with the issues of social status, Christians are called to respond and show love that

embraces one another — a gift and grace from God who has received them in Christ Jesus.

Succinctly, this study is significant for the doctoral program for several reasons. First, we looked at the social history of the congregations behind Romans 16 in comparison to the current UMC as a Christian church; and incorporated findings from diaspora women of descent such as the native Americans, African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanics, and other multicultural ethnicity in the life and roles of leading as clergywomen within cross-cultural encounters. As depicted in Romans 16 and finally, the study will provide and additional explanation why disparities among clergywomen in the Michigan Conference of UMC, should not be classified as a "second class" leaders by laity and the counter-parts White Christians but instead be the cornerstone for creating a diverse unified church of Christ as reveled by the early church depicted by Paul himself in Romans 16.

The message of obedience, unity, mutuality, and love is what is portrayed in the text. In the present, those in leadership roles such as clergy, priests, and others, are called to live their calling as obedient disciples of Christ. They are also to teach laity that there is no difference in ethnicity when it comes to teaching the word of God. As disciples of Christ, we are called to reach out to people of all nations (Mt 28: 19-20). Leadership should not be personal; instead, it should be embraced as a vital calling role of fulfilling God's mission. Shaping congregations to adopt to that "other" leader they see "differently" starts from the top leadership of the church. The bishops and the superintendents must prepare and equip leaders who serve cross-cultural appointments for the healthy welfare of the congregations as well as the appointed clergywomen

pastors. Like Paul, who highly commended Phoebe to the Christians in Rome to trust her, the Church leadership must adopt Paul's teaching example. Shaping the congregations and acquainting them with set values – the congregation's social context and its place – is vital for the wellbeing of the congregations[47]and needs to be a priority. Therefore, it is up to top leadership to equip, prepare, and train intercultural clergywomen before sending them out into intercultural field encounters. Paul prepared his fellow saints and so must the leadership of the today's context The United Methodist Church Michigan Area must prepare those elected to serve in intercultural appointments as well as their congregations. The practice of encountering others in a community is a joyful walk on earth that God desires.

[47] Nancy T. Ammerman, Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney, eds. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 167.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS

The gospel historically is the message of salvation through Jesus Christ whose identity, ministry, death, resurrection, and reign bring healing and transformation to those who believe. Experiencing the love of God through Christ and the Holy Spirit motivates Christians. Believers share their overflowing joy and gratitude with others, spreading the good news throughout the world, and growing the church, which is Christ's body on earth. History gives evidence of the past, present, and the future. Without history, it would be challenging to discover what happened in the past. Cultural encounters include the diversity and thought of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, social and economic areas, age, and language. Early Christianity reminds us of the movements and messages of humanity which help shape the church, society, and world we live in today. Since church history can be broad, this chapter will focus on historical theology and church history[1] seeking to look at the voice of John Wesley in church history who thrived during the Wesleyan movement.

The Reverend John Wesley portrayed a paradigm shift in leadership of Methodism modeling culturally congruent nurturing and preparing pastors and laity who were elected to serve in the church of God. The context for this historical foundation will

[1] Gordon L. Heath, *Doing Church History* (Toronto, Canada: Clements Publishing, 2008), 36.

be examined through the life of the Wesleyan theologian John Wesley, the founder of Methodism and an ordained priest in the Church of England. John Wesley was born on June 17,1703, and his brother Charles was born on December 18, 1707.[2] John Wesley was saved from Epworth rectory fire on February 9, 1709. John Wesley was viewed to be a chosen one. John entered Charterhouse School, London, where he later joined Christ Church, Oxford, on June 24, 1720.[3] The brothers preached about individual and communal piety — a strict method of spiritual formation. The Wesleyan way of life and teachings calls for hope to reform the church while spreading scriptural holiness throughout the world.

History informs us how this family movement began: Yrigoyen et al. writes,

> The Wesley family, headed by Anglican priest Samuel and his wife Susanna Wesley, were unfailingly loyal to the CE.[4] Three sons – Samuel, Jr., John, and Charles Wesley – became priests in the CE. The two younger Wesley brothers became key figures in the 18th-century evangelical movement known as Methodism. They initially regarded their Methodism as a renewal movement within the CE, but John later enabled American Methodists to form a new Methodist church. Nevertheless, John and Charles revered the heritage of the CE including its *Book of Common Prayer*, *Articles of Religion, and Book of Homilies;* these three played an important role in John Wesley's plan for the worship, doctrine, and governance of early American Methodism, which was founded as the Methodist Episcopal Church. The term Anglican is often used to designate distinctive features of the liturgy, theological ideas, and polity of and the CE.[5]

---

[2] Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. and Susan E. Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013), 98, ProQuest eBook Central, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/dtl/detail.action?docID=1562859.

[3] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, xvii.

[4] Note that CE stands for the Church of England.

[5] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, 98. 6.

Historically, John Wesley played a key role in this project. His approach to Christian mission through a therapeutic motif, physical, spiritual, and social healing,[6] and practical principles that he applied enhanced the understanding of how the community is bounded to live. This study illuminated the ways and degrees that Wesley employed physical healing practices that helped him to care for and reach the masses in England with the gospel. The 17th century Anglican practice of the "cure of souls" and the rise of regulated medicine in 18th century England influenced Wesley's emphasis on the therapeutic nature of the gospel of Christ and the character of his ministry. Wesley also provides a backdrop on historical formation of the Wesleyan movement.[7]

Nonetheless, Wesley's groundwork provides a review of how Wesleyan Methodists used history to shape their future direction. John Wesley is known for his doctrinal standards.[8] The historic Christian faith in God presents the theological tasks that Wesley implied. History reveals that our forebears reaffirmed the ancient Christian message. The Methodists' preaching and teachings present theological task viewed as the quadrilateral — meaning the teachings are grounded in Scripture, informed by Christian tradition, then enlivened in experience, and tested by reason.[9] John Wesley died on March 2, 1791. Prior to his death, his movement had over 56,000 members while his preaching and networking drew large groups in the British Isles, extending to the United

---

[6] William H. Willimon, "The spiritual formation of the pastor: call and community." *Quarterly Review* 3, no. 2 (1983): 31, 42, ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials EBSCOhost.

[7] John Wesley, February 8, 1770, *Journals and Diaries V (1765-75*), ed. W. Reginald Ward and Richard P. Heitzenrater, vol. 22 of "The Bicentennial Edition of the Works of John Wesley" (Nashville: TN: Abingdon Press, 1976), 215.

[8] *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church* (Nashville, TN: United Methodist Publishing House, 2012), 56-60.

[9] *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, 81-86.

States of America and various parts of France.[10] Wesley routinely used lay preachers who were appointed and travelled to their "stations." George Smith, in his commentary narration, writes,

> by the annual conference, as well as by non-itinerant preachers who exercised a local ministry within the circuit, Wesley's influence dominated the movement, and in his lifetime, he had put in place an organizational structure that would ensure that things continued after his death according to his plan.[11]

It is to this standard that Methodists share a common heritage with every age and nation. This suggests that Methodists must embrace all people of all nations.

John Wesley and his Wesleyan Movement gave us a rich historical context to understand the history of Methodism and its impact on Societies. The Wesleyan Movement guided our understanding on the nature of mission of God in our communities through the lens of all those who are called to serve. John Wesley's historical work of Methodism, created revival with a particular emphasis on "love of the neighbor"[12] which can be examined through the life principles and interest of educating and tutoring the young women, a training CWOC deserves.[13]

History is a tradition that leaders have to embrace in their ministries. Ministry can never be taught without church history. History presents to us that love for a neighbor that is taught in ministry as the second greatest commandment must be woven in all church teachings. To study history, George Marden writes,

---

[10] George Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism,* Vol. 2 (London, UK: Longman, Green, and Roberts, 1857, 1861), 3901.

[11] Smith, *History of Wesleyan Methodism,* 3901.

[12] Richard P. Heitzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists,* Second ed. (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013), 137.

[13] Hetzenrater, *Wesley and the People Called Methodists*, 74-75.

> The basic reason we why who are Christian should teach and learn history that we may better understand ourselves and our fellow men in relation to our own culture and to the world. Since the Christian's task is to live in this world and to witness the love of God as manifested in Christ, it is essential for us to understand ourselves and the world as best as we can. Love is the Christian's central obligation, and understanding is an essential ingredient in love. If we are going to love others, it seems evident that we should try our best to understand them.[14]

Drawing from the above quote, I agree that the lack of interest in past events can be associated with lack of love for others. It is such a concept that illuminates us to look at John Wesley's leadership and organization to enact the Wesleyan movement that many have adopted, embraced, and celebrated in ministry.

Place

History records that the place of the context ministry matters. It is a defined point of convergence of history, geography, socioeconomics, narrative, geology, biology, religion, and politics. The place is an undergirding to the perceptions that affect how ministry is conceived and experienced. To be effective in ministry, one must have the knowledge, respect, and even love of the ministry's unique place. One must understand and have empathy for the people, the land, and its history.

While the population of a place can be examined in aggregate, the individuals who exist within the place will each experience the place in a unique manner. Clergywomen in cross-cultural ministry will attest to this experience of a foreign space. The place is simultaneously both general and specific, personal, and public. Ashworth

---

[14] George M. Marsden, "A Christian Perspective for Teaching of History," in *A Christian View of History*, eds. George M. Marsden and Frank Roberts (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975), 31-32.

and Graham capture this sense of dichotomy in their book, *Senses of Place: Senses of Time:* They write,

> It cannot also be assumed that there is one single identifiable collective place identity . . . society is diverse, and these many diversities will result in equally diverse place identities . . . the identity being sought is a chimera and the process of the search is a serious denial of the social, ethnic, and racial diversity.[15]

Drawing from this quote, I agree that holding a communal identity has its power within the unique sense of place formed by each actor within the context of the ministry. Fulkerson documented this in her study of Good Samaritan Church, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church*. The Good Samaritan congregation, which was highly diverse, was a reflection manifested by its place within the public, social and spiritual culture, but each of the diverse subgroups experienced the place differently based upon their personal histories and positions.[16] I affirm this measure as expressed regarding the Good Samaritan congregation.

Creating and sustaining healthy ministry requires the complex task of understanding the multitude of perceptions, regarding the place, held by the stakeholders and actors. To faithfully do that, one must develop a topophilia, a keen sense of love and empathy for their specific ministry place. This process needs to be grounded in an understanding of measurable and concrete factors like demographics, geology, census data, and political structures. But this data must be informed by an intimate knowledge of the narratives that form the perceptions of the people. These narratives are what inform the actors of the meaning of the concrete factors. Fulkerson writes, regarding Good

---

[15] G. J. Ashworth and B. J. Graham, *Senses of Place: Senses of Time* (London, UK: Routledge, 2016), 223, eBook Collection (EBSCOhost), EBSCOhost.

[16] Mary McClintock Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007), 208.

Samaritan: "Its unity was not based upon experiencing these symbols in the same way; they had alternative resonances for different groups, resonances refracted by the different bodily properties of various members."[17] The researcher agrees with Fulkerson that it is not just experienced symbol that creates division. Disunity is created based on various unknown factors sometime behavioral issues that Jesus himself addresses in his biblical teachings.

Besides, a good leader must recognize that each of these perceptions of a place is equally valid. Each actor has a claim to the place, which is part of the communal whole. The service to God's mission reaches across the lines of all perceptions of the place. Darrell Guder, in his essay, "A Multicultural and Translational Approach," writes:

> At every step of the way, the discourse evoked by this approach precludes any particular culture making claims to universal validity and normativity, recognizing that it is the Spirit's empowering work to enable the articulation of the gospel in every culture, as it is translated by faithful witnesses carrying out the apostolic mission.[18]

Drawing from the above quote, I agree that the mission of the church is dependent upon good leadership. All woven in the church culture must collaborate to carry on the mission of the church. Theologian John Wesley identified the place for his ministry as a space for teaching and nurturing. His leadership style made many Christians to join him. His doctrine and principles allowed his followers to learn and be educated in order to become leaders. As a leader, he spent time alone practicing spiritual disciplines.[19] This leadership concept has been encouraged in ministry, but the tradition sometimes has been

---

[17] Fulkerson, *Places of Redemption,* 208.

[18] Craig Ott, Darrell L. Guder, Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Edward Rommen, and Ed Stetzer, *The Mission of the Church: Five Views in Conversation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016), 23.

[19] Spiritual disciplines: Praying, fasting, scripture reading, and conferencing.

overlooked by clergy overall in the modern society**.** This concept could be a principle model provided for clergywomen in cross-cultural appointments as they go through times that are indispensable for nurturing and preparation.

Leadership and Organization

Leadership is orientation and at the same time leadership is centering people. Leadership is a driving force that propels ministry. Leadership is connecting people with the divine in a manner that builds the kin-dom of God. The primary role of leadership is to evoke vocation for the group and its individuals. This model of formative leadership is supported by David Lose et al, in the article "Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians' Callings in the World Project." He talks about fashioning formative, rather than performative, leaders[20] who coach and guide those in their care to be able to claim their vocational identity and participate in God's activity to love and bless the world. This model requires the ability to lead people in imagining a fulfillment of the kin-dom. It requires leadership via the witness of one's life to the truth that there is meaning in that kin-dom. Moreover, it requires leadership in creating structures and pathways that bring people into the identification of the desire for and of God, the empowerment to pursue God, the tools to learn about God, and the practices that lead to embodying God. Similarly, Branson and Martinez write about interpretive, relational, and implemental leadership:

[20] David J. Lose, Gordon S. Mikoski, Eileen D. Crowley, Rolf A. Jacobson, Scott Cormode, and Jeffrey A. Conklin-Miller, "Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians' Callings in the World Project," *Theology & Religion* (2015): 389, https://scholar. google. com/ scholar?q=Equipping+the+Equippers: +The+Pedagogical+and+Programmatic+Implications&hl= en&as_sdt=0&as_vis=1&oi=scholart.

> Those in leadership need to attend three spheres of activities. Each sphere requires that we perceive, interpret and act concerning on-the-ground situations. Interpretive leadership is about meanings: it provides the resources and guidance needed to shape a community of learners that pays attention to and interprets both texts and contexts. Relational leadership shapes all of the human connections (internal and external) and attends to the health and synergism of those relationships. Implemental leadership guides and initiates activities and structures so that a church embodies gospel meanings and relationships.[21]

Drawing from this quote, I agree and preclude that leadership is a skill that is learned and adopted. Clergywomen of color are part of this circles of leadership and the resistance and pushback distorts the human connections. In concurrence with Branson and Martinez's explanation of implemental leadership, the execution of leadership is dependent upon the practices of the leader and the community. The practices that allow the church to embody the meanings and relationships are a coherent set of activities that intentionally and repeatedly are enacted. This embodiment, coupled with its manifestation within the context of relationships, is integral to Gina Grandy's understanding, as written in "Contemplative Leadership: The Possibilities for the Ethics of Leadership Theory and Practice." She writes,

> We propose a rethinking of leadership as an embodied and relational experience possible in organizations with a good purpose and with individuals who possess an intimate understanding of, and commitment to, that purpose.[22]

Reflecting on the above quote, I therefore, propose that leadership is the embodied practices of one who mediates experiences with the divine, facilitates interpretations of meaning through relationships with others, and implements practices

---

[21] Mark Lau Branson and Juan Francisco Martínez, *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: a Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 55.

[22] Gina Grandy, "Contemplative Leadership: The Possibilities for the Ethics of Leadership Theory and Practice," *Journal of Business Ethics* 143, no. 3 (July 2017): 423-440, https://www.jstor.org/stable/45022153.

that embody that meaning in a way that evokes the vocations of the community and the individual. This creates a driving force that creates and sustains ministry based upon the evoked vocations of the people and community to participate in the kin-dom of God.

This Model of leadership was well exemplified in John Wesley's ministry. Early in his life, his leadership began while still in college. In the book, *John Wesley A Biography*, Stephen Tomkins writes that on October 21, 1729, John was summoned back to Lincoln college to lecture and tutor, supervising eleven students while ministering to them in the parish.[23] Leadership was instilled in him — thus giving him a dominant personality. The role of leading in ministry is vital to those called to serve. This is the model clergywomen would need in the cross-cultural ministry.

We can agree that John Wesley's leadership was not perfect; he made mistakes and tried to repent or change the injurious behavior. A case in point is when he made one mistake after the other. He was an immense leader but his visit to Georgia from England brought him to a test. His experimental ministry in Georgia was his second phase of Methodism after his first phase in England. His leadership principles had to change to fit the environment and place.

Organization

History informs us that John Wesley, the father and founder of Wesleyan Methodism, organized and expanded his mission in many parts of the world. Even though on March 2, 1791, John Wesley dies, in July the British Methodism divided into districts,

---

[23] Stephen Tomkins, *John Wesley: A Biography* (Grand Rapids MI: and Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 30.

while France made a separate circuit of British Methodism.[24] John Wesley planted seeds in many forms of Christianity expansion. Organization in ministry is rampant, and John Wesley embraced that technique to reform the Wesleyan tradition. For example, his teachings left a mark for those who are called in ministry. Wesley did not just preach but he also prepared more prudent leaders.

Due to Wesley's congruent organization, Methodism expanded to many parts of the world. The areas that missionaries reached included other parts of world. For example, from Latin America to the United States, Methodism moved in 1873 to Mexico. Although the European Continent expanded, Methodism in Europe was relatively unsuccessful until the middle of the 19th century.[25] In Africa, the British-based Methodist Church of South Africa was easily the largest on the Continent with over 3 million members giving the church growth a much larger community.[26] Methodism expanded to Asia reaching Australasia (Australia, New Zealand, New Guinea, and the neighboring islands of the Pacific Ocean). According to Yrigoyen et al, it is recorded that Methodist membership in Australasia reached 1,250,000 with a total community of about 3 million.[27] The positive growth impact was due to the leadership and organization that John Wesley had instigated. He sowed seeds in his followers that the movement spread all over the world. As such, clergywomen of color need this positive support in their ministry for effective ministry.

---

[24] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, 9.

[25] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, 9.

[26] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, 9.

[27] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism,* 9.

Education

Education is the body of experiences that informs the actions, beliefs, and understandings of the ministry unit. It is foundational to the transformation of people into disciples. Education occurs via transfer of information, but also praxis and witness of life. Education encompasses all input that informs the ministry unit. This unit may be an individual, but it may also be a group. Information is educational when it informs the actions, beliefs, and understandings of the unit. When an individual participates in education, they have the option to incorporate the current information into the way they think or act. When a group participates in education, each person within the group may draw something different from the process. Thus, a group's adaptation to current information is unique because it is often not intentionally coordinated among the members. One member's enactment of his/her interpretation of added information may cause the other members to respond in a manner in which they may not have responded had they been responding directly to the information, rather than to the member's response to the information.

The objective of education is transformation. The conveyance or transfer of information is one technique of education, but it is not the end objective of education. This is not to say that the educator has a specific end goal in mind. Rather, the educator is seeking to empower and enrich the other participants in the process in a manner that is transformative.[28] The educator's ambition is to give the participants a fuller

---

[28] Susan Willhauck, "Liturgy and Education for Justice in an Age of Disbelief," *Religious Education* 91, no. 3 (1996): 352-367, ATLASerials, Religion Collection, EBSCOhost.

understanding on which to draw their own conclusions regarding their understandings, beliefs, and actions.

Boyung Lee writes:

> Education in the church happens in and through everything we do beyond the explicit educational programming. Therefore, a church's entire ministry of worship, fellowship, teaching, mission, and proclamation can serve as its curriculum.[29]

Drawing from this quote, I concur that every experience of the church is an educational experience for the participants and for the observers who call the leaders to be intentional in forming experiences that confirm the kin-dom of God and conform to the mission of God. In particular, the praxis cycle of doing, reflecting, and modifying is essential to creating a faithful witness. In addition, this praxis methodology, when taught, is a manner to evoke transformation while allowing the participant to formulate his/her own conclusions about where that praxis is leading them in fulfilling their vocation within the kin-dom. David Lose et al equates this praxis with the techniques of coaches and music teachers. A case in point is that good coaches and music teachers know that students learn best not simply from listening but from doing. By engaging students in a new practice with an opportunity to reflect together on their experience is much needful. Gordon Mikoski and colleagues created an opportunity for students to explore how they, and the people they will lead, may experience God's activity in their lives more deeply through intentional and creative use of a common liturgical practice.[30] How about this practice theory being introduced to those church of a different culture? Perhaps learning would

---

[29] Boyung Lee, *Transforming Congregations through Community*: *Faith Formation from the Seminary to the Church* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013), ix.

[30] Lose et al, "Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians' Callings in the World Project," 390.

transform lives. I agree with Mikoski that practical theories are vital in ministry of a church with a cross-cultural leadership.

Liturgy is a praxis of faith wherein the participants embody the faith regardless of the completeness of their understanding. It is through the embodiment and following reflection that the transformation can occur with the consent and guidance and nurturing of the participant. This empowers, educates, and evokes vocation in the participant in a manner that allows education to become transformed into a disciple. Clergywomen need this source of empowerment and guidance to thrive in ministry.

John Wesley understood the *sine qua non* for education in one's life. He never stopped pursuing further education through his writings and sermons. He exemplified what it means to be educated. His pursuit of holiness during the years 1731-1735 was always to "wrestle and fight and pray."[31] The question we ought to ask now is how is our current seminary education received and applied? Who gets the education and under what circumstances is the education received meaningful and sustainable to the clergywomen in today's church? The perception that clergywomen are not received wholeheartedly in certain churches calls for a discussion on what knowledge and education level they acquired and bring to ministry within their cross-cultural encounters. I would contend, it is the same seminary education received by all those who have been ordained.

Further, education was a key component of John Wesley's ministry. He understood the importance of having doctrinal standards as he pushed and taught the

---

[31] Tomkins, *John Wesley,* 35.

scriptural doctrines,[32] Standards in leading Sunday schools, worship liturgy, and scriptural interpretation, along with the traditions, instituted and guided the way to lead and educate congregants and leaders. Not only did he want the leaders to be trained but he also wrote manuscripts from which the leaders were to use. Clergywomen could benefit from such training and education in cross-cultural appointments. Learning what is best for the congregations they serve and the congregations having tools for learning other traditions would avoid a lot on misconceptions in today's church. Many people do not like change for the fear of the unknown. But if congregants are well-educated and well- informed, in addition to being provided with tools for ministry, the work of the church would be carried out in love and trust of each other.

Community and Nurturing

Community is the series of relationships in which people are engaged and are nurtured. Within the context of ministry, a community is an interdependent group of people who intentionally or unintentionally operate to fulfill a role in the kingdom of God. It is the gathered body within and between which ministry occurs. Community assigns a value to relationships that exceed mere reciprocity and brings us into kinship-like relationship that John Wesley instituted in his teachings using design of the classes.[33]

Our understanding of the Trinity is a recognition that God is communal. The fullness of God's identity is expressed in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Boyung Lee, in

---

[32] *The United Methodist Book of Discipline* (Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016), 57.

[33] Thomas C. Oden, *John Wesley's Teachings: Ethics and Society*, Vol, 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014), 46.

the book *Transforming Congregations Through Community: Faith Formation from the Seminary to the Church*, speaks from experience within an Eastern tradition that upholds the value of community over individualism. Lee writes:

> Every dimension of human social life is an outcome of what people do together. Individuals are products of collective action; they are inseparable from customs, norms, beliefs, and meanings. Hence, facts and truths are collectively enacted. Accordingly, one must utilize collective philosophical anthropology to address human life fully.[34]

Counter to the traditional American understanding of independence, the series of relationships that form a community create identity for its members. Inherently, humans seek to identify themselves in relationships to other people. They identify, in the positive, as a mother, father, son, daughter, spouse, church member or in opposition, as a loner, outcast, rebel, or the other. But never can an individual fully differentiate the self from the community.

Modern Western Christianity has for decades focused on personal salvation. However, I contend that salvation is communal. We are saved within our community. Community nurtures, empowers, informs, and challenges Christians to grow. We find our place in the kin-dom of God through relationships of love with neighbor and enemy. P. Block, in the book *Community: The Structure of Belonging,* writes,

> We are in community each time we find a place where we belong. First and foremost, to belong is to be related to and a part of something. It is membership, the experience of being at home in the broadest sense of the phrase. It is the opposite of thinking that wherever I am, I would be better off somewhere else. Or that I am still forever wandering, looking for that place where I belong. The opposite of belonging is to feel isolated and always (all ways) on the margin, an outsider.[35]

---

[34] Lee, *Transforming Congregations through Community,* 12.

[35] P. Block, *Community: The Structure of Belonging*, 1st ed. (San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2009), xii.

This concept of belonging implies a certain permanence to the network of relationships. Community assigns a value to relationships that exceed mere reciprocity and brings us into kinship-like relationships. This permanence results when people are willing to work through adversity to strengthen the bonds, rather than abandon the relationships when specific needs of the individual are not met. As Veena Das wrote, "Unlike the inevitable instability of a place, certain 'critical events' in the making of a community provide a privileged occasion for the congealing of its processes and practices."[36] Das' theory that "critical events" help define a community is one standard by which one can differentiate community from group. Within a group, the affinity is easily lost based on stressful or painful events. In a community, they become a part of the identity.

John Wesley was a man who belonged in a community and an avatar. Within the Methodist societies, he used history, nature, and design in his work. He nurtured the societies teaching them principles of being good Christian stewards. Clergywomen in the Michigan Conference could use the same nurturing principles in their ministry.

Spiritual formation/Vocation

We look through the lens of history to understand our Spiritual formation. In this case, Vocation is the understanding of one's role in the mission of God. Within each place where a disciple or faith community lives, there is a unique vocation that aligns the gifts and graces of the acting unity (individual or community) with the needs of the place.

---

[36] Veena Das, *Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India* (Delhi, India: New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995), Ohio LINK Library Catalog – LR, EBSCOhost.

The kin-dom cannot be complete until everyone is living out their vocation. One of the calls of a pastor, or spiritual leader, is to help people and the church grapple with their unique vocation.

Parker Palmer acknowledges the importance of self-knowledge in the pursuit of vocation. He wrote in *Let Your Life Speak: Listening to the Voice of Vocation*:

> Before I can tell my life what I want to do with it, I must listen to my life telling me who I am. I must listen for the truths and values at the heart of my own identity, not the standards by which I must live — but the standards by which I cannot help but live if I am living my own life.[37]

Therefore, finding one's vocation is first a discovery process, rather than a cultivation process. A. J. Conyers compares the unearthing of one's vocation to Lazarus being called forth from death into life. Conyers identifies vocation as being "made alive to the reality that we do not merely exist but are 'called forth' to a divine purpose."[38] Cross-cultural clergywomen have heard this calling; therefore, being viewed as the "other" diminishes their ultimate goals in ministry.

I contend that finding one's vocation may be the ultimate goal of the spiritual journey. But, like place and the other elements discussed in these pages, vocation is a moving target. It is dependent first upon place. How a person's gifts, passions, and graces are used for the building of the kin-dom is dependent on the places of pain and need within their place. Knowing the place in which one's ministry exists is integral to effectively and faithfully living one's vocation. Ministry occurs when vocation and place intersect.

---

[37] Parker J Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000, 2000), 3.

[38] A. J. Conyers*, The Meaning of Vocation,* The Center for Christian Ethics (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2004), 18, http://www.baylor.edu/ifl/christianreflection/VocationarticleConyers.pdf.

Vocation is, also, dependent upon education. A person is in a constant state of being educated, whether intentionally or unintentionally. People process information in formal and informal ways all the time; they are in a constant state of flux. New skills offer new gifts to be shared in vocation. In addition, a gathered body also has a unique vocation. Each change in the community, be it in leadership or in other roles, potentially evokes a new vocation.

The ability to grasp, even fleetingly, onto this evolving sense of vocation in a person, or group's life, gives meaning and purpose to the entity and taps the actors into the great kin-dom. It is this participation that renews and fuels the pursuit of God. It is in this process that people recognize their verité and know their lives as being authentically their own,[39] and simultaneously the gift of a benevolent and loving God. This ability to align, even momentarily, one's gifts and graces with the places of need and pain in the community allows people to feel a part of the kin-dom of God. It offers deep insight and satisfaction, even salvation, in those moments of synergetic connection between vocation, community, and kin-dom.

John Wesley saw the means of grace as a tool for justification, and a rite to forge relationship with God. In a world that is so polarized the historical John Wesley becomes the epitome that allows growth into holiness and perfection, thus molding the church model into the image of Christ. The church can adopt this model and learn from Wesley.

---

[39] Joel Winkelman, "John Dewey's Theory of Vocation," *American Political Thought* 5, no. 2 (2016): 303-325.

Inclusion

During John Wesley's time, although women were not on the forefront in leadership, Wesley was open to include all people in ministry. His belief in means of grace was gravitated toward women and children. Thence, he believed all infants and adults should receive the sacraments of Baptism. Wesley gave good examples of accepting all God's people in the church. John Wesley wrote,

> Do all the good you can. By all the means you can. In all the ways you can. In all places you can. At all the times you can. To all the people you can. As long as you ever can.[40]

This quote points to the view that John Wesley was a leader who included all people and revered the spaces they lived or worked in. The term "to all people you can "signifies his teachings were open to both men and women ministers or clergy. Love was the cutting edge of a united community. Ministry today should be able to allow clergywomen to teach and express their cultural values. In John Wesley's writings regarding character of a Methodist, once one goes through the doctrinal standards and his/her character is tested, they were ordained. Learning a community meant including scholarly, apprentice, and ordinary people. In Wesley's teachings, he taught all who were ready to learn and those who saw scripture as a way of salvation signified that they attained faith.[41] In other words, their character determined their readiness to serve. Moreover, they were able to produce a "fruit." Clergywomen of the "other color" must be given an opportunity to produce the "fruit" that John Wesley instituted through the lens of history.

---

[40] BrainyQuotes.com, "John Wesley quotes," https://www.brainy quote/ john_wesley-524889.

[41] John Wesley, "Salvation by Faith," in *John Wesley's Sermons An Anthology*, ed. Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 373.

The Invitation and Pursuit of God

The church has long held that human beings are created in God's image and that we are dependent upon God. William Placher states, "we are finite and exist only because God made us."[42] Randy Maddox writes of John Wesley's anthropology that "Wesley's most fundamental conviction about human life was that we are created and dependent beings."[43] Wesley himself wrote, "It was free grace that 'formed man of the dust of the ground and breathed into him a living soul' and stamped on that soul the image of God."[44] To be human is to be finite. In our limited capacity as creatures, we must come to rely on our infinite God.

God's invitation is centered toward sacramental rites of God's grace. John Wesley defines this grace as 1) Prevenient grace: — grace that surrounds all of us. 2) Convincing- grace that makes us aware of our sins. 3) Justifying grace — grace that forgives us and puts us into the right relationship with God, and 4) Sanctifying grace — grace that allows us to grow into holiness and perfection, molding us into the image of Christ.[45] My personal ministry experience is centered on these graces to walk humbly and reach perfection grace that can lead me to eternal life.

In his sermon "Means of Grace," John Wesley echoed "'means of grace' as ordinary channel that convey to men prevenient, justification or sanctification grace

---

[42] William Placher, *Essentials of Christian Theology* (London, UK: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 135.

[43] Placher*, Essentials of Christian Theology*, 135.

[44] Wesley, "Salvation by Faith," 373.

[45] "This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion," The United Methodist General Conference*,* 2004, 7, www.GBOD.Org.

which he understood the words to be, 'outward signs of inward signs of grace.'"[46] These are channels of grace that Jesus instituted in the Gospel. John Wesley saw these signs and acts of grace as God's love — both visible and effective.[47] To pursue God's kingdom, one has to walk with grace and love and implore the core image of baptism in the New Testament of dying and rising with Christ. These rites are what those called to ministry as Methodists should live by in this covenant of understanding God.

John Wesley saw the means of grace as a tool for justification and a rite to forge a relationship with God with faith being a necessary condition of justification.[48] John Wesley became the avatar of Methodism. In John Wesley's writings, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Outler et al shared what Wesley thought in editing Wesley's work:

> Justification is another word for pardon. It is the forgiveness of all our sins; and what is necessarily implied therein, our acceptance with God. The price whereby this hath been procured for us (commonly termed 'the meritorious cause of our justification) is the blood and righteousness of Christ.'[49]

Wesley's view on salvation speaks to the works of Christian faith. It is the opposite of thinking that wherever I am, I would be better off somewhere else. Or that I am still forever wandering, looking for that place where I belong. In juxtaposition, this concept of belonging implies a certain permanence to the network of relationships.

Frank Baker comments:

> Millions of warm-hearted people throughout the world who look to John and Charles Wesley as their spiritual pioneers still remember that in 1739 John

---

[46] John Wesley, *Wesley's Sermons. An Anthropology The Means Of Grace: An Anthropology,* ed. Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 160.

[47] "This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion," The United Methodist General Conference*,* 2004, 7, www.GBOD.Org.

[48] Wesley, "Justification by Faith," 373.

[49] John Wesley, *Wesley's Sermons. An Anthropology The Scripture Way of Salvation: An Anthropology*, ed. Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991), 373.

> Wesley had proclaimed prophetically, 'I look upon all the world as my parish.' This was written by the priest of the Church of England after he had led a frustrating mission to British immigrants and native Americans in Georgia, stirred up to his own spiritual shortcomings by Moravian refugees, and returned to England.[50]

Yet again on 24 May 1738, under the influence of Peter Bohler, another Moravian, Baker stated:

> John Wesley altered his allegiance from stern religious discipline as God's way of salvation to simple faith in Christ and declared, 'I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death.' Less than three weeks later, he made a pilgrimage to the Moravians in Germany, seeking (as he replied when asked why he went to Herr hut) 'to see the place where the Christians live.'[51]

The quotes above by Yrigoyen, precludes the understanding that discipline in the church of God is vital. Researcher agrees that all called as children of God, must exercise faith to gain salvation. Clergywomen are walking in this experience and support for their ministry is required. Concisely, historical information reveals the kind of leader and influence John Wesley was. He was a historical figure that many modeled then and still emulate today. The current UMC needs to work more on inclusivity to carry out the holy orders of love just like Wesley concluded. To feel warm hearted is to love what one is doing by profession. Clergywomen of color love what they are doing and should not become vulnerable in their ministry contexts because of color, language, or their ethnicity.

---

[50] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism,* 14.

[51] Yrigoyen and Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism,* 1.

Conclusion

Lack of diversity and inclusion in my context ministry called for investigation and ways to include clergywomen in ministry without bias or misunderstanding. An ability to improve the ministry reveals research and allow openness to change in the twenty-first century. John Wesley is the preeminent teacher in Methodism history that can be emulated. His teachings and works can be modeled to succor leaders, pastors, and clergywomen to fulfill their ministry callings. Advocating for clergywomen through proper leadership and organization is vital. At the same time, teaching congregations while empowering laity to be open minded so that they can hear God's still voice would create love for all clergy under the direction of the bishop who appointed them to serve those congregations.

Church history is a core value in ministry. Congregations need to be educated on cross-cultural appointments before they receive clergy who share a different history and values. John Wesley led with high standards of education of that eminent servant of Jesus Christ. He was a good example of change for the better. Moreover, John Wesley has already prepared the tools and structured standards of leadership to enforce its ministry. The Michigan Conference must educate and address the factors involved in breaking down barriers and building bridges between multicultural clergywomen who are left vulnerable and misunderstood by those they are called to lead and serve.

John Wesley and his Wesleyan movement in today's society is a prime example of how history repeats itself. In contrast to the church today, it has been moved to the far right in contrast to Wesleyan doctrinal standards. Therefore, pastors and church leaders should refer back to history in order to grasp and understand the future. Congregants, just

like pastors, need training to understand the history of the church. The leader and preacher, Rev. John Wesley, embraced in his teachings both lay preachers and clergy. Examining past history indicates that Wesley's teachings are diminishing in the current church causing labeling and division. The church must go back to its roots to remain the Wesleyan church founded by John and Charles Wesley. This can be achieved through education, community nurturing, preparation, and embracing the holiness of Jesus Christ

CHAPTER FOUR

THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter captures how theology shapes humanity's way of living and defines the relationship humanity represents in a community. The historical Jesus and biblical teachings remind us that we are all created in God's image as evidenced in this words which states, "God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good" (Genesis 1:31, NRSV). God saw what was created and God was pleased. God created man and woman to share responsibilities. Mary, Martha, Mary Magdala, and others were close to God in life. Systematic theology gives us an understanding of the doctrine and point us to what is a holistic approach to theology. In a world that is intercultural, practical theology must be practiced.

From the lens of being an immigrant and serving in a cross-racial/cross-cultural appointment, I was prompted to investigate cultural disparities that occur and how humanity can understand one another's worldviews. Statistics in USA census reveals that about 20.3 % population are women of color.[1] As the numbers increase yearly, it is believed that women of color will be the majority of all women in the United States by

[1] American Anthropology Association, "What is Anthropology," 2023, https://americananthro.org/learn-teach/what-is-anthropology/.

2060.[2] Reflecting on statistics, many CWOC are joining ministries and are placed in cross-cultural appointments where they face challenges. The term "cross-cultural-cross-racial" characterizes the appointment of a minister whose worldview (values, beliefs, myths, religious behaviors, instincts) and racial ethnicity are different from the dominant racial ethnicity they are appointed to serve.

The Bible characters such as Abram and Sarai, Joseph, Moses, Rahab, Ruth, Esther, Daniel, Jesus, Peter, Cornelius, Paul, Lydia, Silas, Phillip, and many more played a role in ministry. But what do these names have in common? They were each called by God to minister among cultures, to connect and bridge people across their differences, and to be the community of God. Throughout the Bible, their faith and ministry gave witness to God at work, bringing people together, and overcoming self-imposed boundaries of race, culture, and social unrest. Many of them had mentors who nurtured and supported them on how to do ministry. Moses for example was one whom God really prepared before saving the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. It took patience and preparation to give instructions to Moses who felt unfit and unprepared to lead the Israelites.

The schools of thought are necessary to solidify why I argue that preparing leaders in intercultural encounters create effective leadership in church and religion. The art of CWOC receiving supportive pedagogical practices with seasoned mentors and coaches is a fast forward ingredient to self-awareness that can create self-determination in ministry. In his book, *Practical Theology For Church Diversity*, Ken J. Walden argues, "If religious communities want to become effective and relevant in an increasing diverse

[2] American Anthropology Association, "What is Anthropology," 2023, https://americananthro.org/learn-teach/what-is-anthropology/.

world, they must think seriously about revising the ways persons are prepared to become leaders in the church."[3] Lack of preparation for CWOC in their vocational ministry has created negative experience for the women who have been called by God to serve. Supportive feedback and nurture with knowledge of theology protects CWOC from experiencing loneliness. Training and preparation can boost the ethos to acquire knowledge of self-awareness, self-care, and self-determination to a holistic ministry. I agree with Kelly Douglas's statement where she echoes, "historically dialogue is especially important for Black female students. It is through dialogue that they can discover that their own struggle is not simply personal but reflects a wider historical experience."[4] As a researcher, I can relate to this statement as it has impacted me in cross-cultural ministry.

The hypothesis is if CWOC are properly prepared through the usage of a cross-cultural training model, then they will be better equipped to pastor congregations of all ethnicities (races). Thus, women who lead as mentors and coaches will facilitate support to prepare and nurture their counterparts (CWOC). This guidance necessitates that support and assurance of succeeding in the vocational ministry is available.

It is rampant to look at various theologies that guided the research of this chapter and how it helped inform on how CWOC can be self-prepared for the cross-cultural ministry. Considering perspective of classical and current theological views, this section discusses how both categories of theological intercultural world views enhance the

---

[3] Ken J. Walden, *Practical Theology For Church Diversity: A Guide for Clergy and Congregation*s (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 28.

[4] Kelly Brown Douglas, "Teaching Womanist Theology: A Case Study," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 8, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 135.

project. The idea of self-awareness and self-determination is dependent on the mentor or coach creating relevant theological dialogue post to stimulate debate during the round table discussion: why CWOC? why Womanist?

I found myself in my first and second appointments in a cross cultural/cross-racial (CC/CR) ministry. I am aware how the concept of race can change immediately, arbitrarily, and inordinately while it skews critical evaluation of a personhood. In both of these appointments many people misconstrue me to be a person from an African country – Nigeria – or the Caribbean, Jamaica. Seemingly, these seem to be familiar places they know more about. Ordinarily, these assumptions were based on physical and linguistic assessment. I can, myself, explain the difference of people from various regions. I encountered much of the same when I went for my Master of Divinity at Methodist Theological Seminary in Delaware, Ohio. Often, my other fellow African counterparts could differentiate and understand one another. I would greet my African co-learners in a smiling expectation of cultural familiarity only to be surprised that the distinct differences of language or dialect, national origin, culture, reception, and worldview separated us, and the gap needed to be bridged.

The same reception flouted me in my CC/CR appointments. I am very much aware that the words “race” and “gender” are frightful and need to be handled with care and caution. But it is meaningful to and helpful to dialogue about conscious and embedded cultural values, beliefs, and world views that tend to separate us from loving and working together as God’s beloved children. Society labels are based on external features and not based on the heart within. Whether womanist or feminist theological

positions persist, one cannot assume of these theological positions of women of color. It is important to define terminology for this chapter.

Key Terminology

Womanist Theology:

As articulated by women of color, womanist theology is coined by women who were searching for liberation. Alice Walker contends, "Womanist is to feminist as purple to lavender."[5] The roots of women of color are embedded in themselves as they embrace and affirm their cultural heritage, and their religious traditions as celebrated in the early history of their descendants.

Feminist Theology:

Feminist Theology can be described as "The variety of theological perspectives developed to focus on the experiences, needs and concerns of women. The differing forms emerge out of the common recognition of women's oppression. They critique patriarchy and emphasize the role of women's experience in the quest for justice and liberation."[6]

---

[5] Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc., 1983), xi-xii; Nyasha Junior, *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), xiii.

[6] Donald K. McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996), 104.

Practical Theology:

According to the *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, practical theology is the critical reflection on the church's life in both corporate and individual expressions. It has also been called practical divinity.[7] Theology is what shapes our belief of who God is and our mission as humanity. Jesus' theology was simple and came with compassion. Marcus Borg writes that those embedded in our culture would be faithful to Jesus and need to think and speak of a "politics of compassion." This is so both in the church and in shaping the political order. "A politics of compassion as the paradigm for shaping our national life that would produce a social system different in many ways from that generated by our history"[8] — women's history.

Practical theology is the "critical reflection on the church's life in both corporate and individual expressions. Often included are disciplines such as Christian education, homiletics, liturgics, and pastoral care. More broadly it relates to sanctification and living the Christian life. It has been called practical divinity."[9]

Cross-cultural Theology:

Cross-cultural theology is the "development of theological understandings that recognizes the contributions of theologies emerging in different cultures. Conversations

---

[7] McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 244.

[8] Marcus Borg, *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* (San Francisco, CA: Harper-San Francisco, 1994), 31-36.

[9] McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 244.

to enlarge one's own perceptions by understanding insights from other and recognizing the limits of our own contextual theological formulations are important dimensions."[10]

Historical Background: Womanist, Feminist, and Practical Theology.

Womanist theology has been in the making for a long time. The biblical story on women is not new to those studying women history in religion, society, or in workplace institutions. The United Methodist Church has its story to tell about the struggle of clergy women within the church. I will speak in short term about women struggle in the United Methodist Church. There are some people who suggest or think that women admission to ministry is controversial**.** According to Rosemary Keller, "Women were only discussed as objects of men's curiosity, manipulation, or enjoyment, not as human beings who had lives and ideas of their own."[11] Therefore church priorities were not first.

There are even women ministers who reject suggestions that to be "militant" is to be a disdain. The facts today refute such thinking. Women, just like men, stand and are able to function in all disciplinary spheres. Women within the United Methodist Church, (hereafter, UMC), fought adamantly to be ordained. One would think that the error of sexism and classism is over. Today, women of color are still fighting for freedom to be respected and be given voice in ministry. The United Methodist Women began fighting for their religious freedom in 1933 when the first Conference of Methodist Union

---

[10] McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Term*s, 78.

[11] Rosemary Skinner Keller and Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Encyclopedia of Women and Religion in North America* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006), 3-5.

accepted a report to ordain clergywomen.[12] This women's fight was intense and persistent. But it was not until 1968 when that mission was accomplished. The denomination, UMC, accepted women to be ordained. Although the struggle for the women to be in pulpit was an indication for readiness for women to serve in ministry, the debate still looms in many local churches in the UMC where women are still not acknowledged as ordained pastors. Many congregations still have not accepted to be ministered by a CWOC. Women's rights' never fell short. The cry of women still continues placing these women ministers in tough positions to lead effectively. Conflict between church and community has risen in contemporary Christianity, and CWOC find themselves unprepared to serve in CC/CR appointments

The Bible portray many women who were involved in both the New Testament and Old Testament. Women like Sarah, Hagar, Mary mother of Jesus, Martha, Esther, the Samaritan woman, and Pheobe, just to name a few, created a foundation to be voices of feminist theology.

Womanist Theology

Women similar to men are called by God to go and make disciples of all nations. The commanding mission of the church was not just for some class, neither Jews or Gentiles and neither males nor females, but for all humanity. Women adhering to this calling have never rested in using their voices to free themselves from the hurdles of sexism, classism, or racism. A reencounter with original blessings experienced as a lead

[12] "Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society," Volume XLVIII, ed. E. Alan Rose (February 1992): 105-107.

to a new state of being given by God presents the necessity for women to use their voices and identity to serve God.

Pioneers of Feminist Theology

Women like Rosemary Ruether and Mary Daly became critical pioneers in discussing feminist theology. We will explore in detail what role feminist theology plays in today's church. We will address how CWOC are perceived in the church that is so polarized in terms of racial inequity. The scriptures support the role of women as servant leaders. A case in point is Deacon Phoebe who is portrayed as a good feat servant by the Apostle Paul in the book of Romans.

> The oldest Latin commentary on Romans, written in the 360s–380s, circulated under the name of Ambrose, now referred to as Ambrosiaster, offering medieval authors, the seemingly unimpeachable authority of Ambrose of Milan, Ambrosiaster acknowledges that Paul says Phoebe was a minister (ministram) of the church, and because she was a help to many including himself, she ought to be helped on her journey. The Romans' respect for his (i.e., Paul's) stature must, according to Ambrosiaster, translate into their unstinting support for Phoebe.[13]

Pheobe serves as a good example to go and serve in a cross-cultural land. Her foreign voice is deemed to be impactful to the Romans who needed to know more about the church of God.

Due to the classism and sexism, Rosemary Ruether sets a record to address the cultural issues that affect women. Ruether, as a pioneer, argues for women to be prepared and acquire their self-identity. Ruether was born November 2, 1936, and died May 21, 2022, after illuminating the theology of feminism to be included in religious affairs. She

---

[13] Ambrosiaster, "Commentarius in Pauli epistulam ad Romanos (recensio gamma)," ed. H. J. Vogels (Vienna: Hoelder-Pichler-Tempsky, 1966), 477, https://mmp.acdh-dev.oeaw.ac.at/archiv/text/detail/521.

was an American feminist scholar and Roman Catholic theologian known for her significant contributions to the fields of feminist theology and ecofeminist theology.[14] She became a voice of those unheard women when it came to religion, church, leadership, and scholarship.

Feminist Theology

Feminist theology is defined as, "a movement found in several religions, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Christianity."[15] Feminism also can be defined as a discipline that is viewed as "the traditions, practices, scriptures, and theologies of those religions from a feminist perspective. Some of the goals of feminist theology include increasing the role of women among clergy and religious authorities."[16] On the other end, Voices of Sophia argues, "Feminist theology intentionally works against the sexism of these traditions."[17]

Women who identify themselves as womanist are Katie Cannon, Jaquelyn Grant, and Delores Willian. On the other hand, we find women like Barbara Smith, Rosemary Ruether, and Mary Daly being identified as feminists. There is an intersection between the two groups. The history of womanist emerged as a self-identity within the academy of

---

[14] Denise Ackermann, "Rosemary Radford Ruether: Themes from a feminist liberation story," *Scriptura: Journal for Biblical, Theological and Contextual Hermeneutics* 97 (2008): 37–46, doi:10.783 3/97-0-712, ISSN 2305-445X.

[15] Voices of Sophia, "What Is Feminist Theology?" 2008, 12-18, https://voicesofsophia.Word press.com/what-is-feminist-theology/.

[16] Denise Ackermann, "Rosemary Radford Ruether: Themes from a feminist liberation story," *Scriptura: Journal for Biblical, Theological and Contextual Hermeneutics* 97 (2008): 37–46, doi:10.7833 /97-0-712, ISSN 2305-445Xvi.

[17] Voices of Sophia, "What Is Feminist Theology?" 2008, 12-18, https://voicesofsophia.Word press.com/what-is-feminist-theology/.

African Americans. However, that does not mean other women of color from Asia, native American, Hispanics and Latino, and Mexicans are left out. The concept of womanist theology intersects white feminists and women of color. Kattie Cannon accomplished many firsts during the year1974. She became the first Black woman to be ordained in the Presbyterian denomination in 1983. Cannon was a committed teacher, activist, inveterate doodler, artist, and a scholar who changed the field of Christian ethics.

The term "womanist" emerged in the mid-1980s when three African American scholars – Katie Cannon, Jacquelyn Grant, and Delores Williams – realized there was a need for a more inclusive theological and ethical framework concerning black liberation theology. The construction of a womanist ethic and reflection was to encourage black women to reclaim their identity while using their voices as an encouragement towards dismantling the white, patriarchal, dominant narrative. The intercultural world has influenced the womanist and feminism philosophy as best put forth by Alice walker's essay of 1984, "In Search of Mothers Secret Garden." This essay was viewed as "womanist" to be the Black woman, and the "feminist" was to be the White woman. I disagree on this theology. Womanist and feminist apply to all women of color. Alice Walker is the best example in search of a mentor or coach when she admits about the recovery of Zora Neale Hurston, contending that she read all things that she thought were to be read in her lifetime.[18] This depicts the fact that women never stopped searching for their identity whether they are women of color or white.

---

[18] Alice Walker, "Saving the Life That is Your Own: The Importance of Models in the Artist's Life," in *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose* (San Diego, CA: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983), 13.

Practical Theology

Reflecting on practical theology as an encounter of persons of diverse religious traditions in various cultural settings, I believe that the Christian engagement of comparative theology and diverse spiritual practices are mutual. These religious dimensions create room for discussion on my ministry and how it is impacted through the lens of a theological framework of CC/CR ministry.

Relevance to the Context

Womanist and feminist theology, along with practical theology, informs my DMin project that if both the leaders and the church membership bring their strengths to the table of leadership development, cultural intelligence can be upheld — meaning both sides will be able to learn from each other and work collaboratively. As believers, we must remember that we are servants of Christ. We are to assist, train, and resource, not meddle in Christ's affairs and undermine Christ's leadership envisioned through womanhood. Instead, we must reach out to Christ and regain relevancy in the preparation of Christ's leaders by nurturing and mentoring them.

The local body of Christ, community of believers, can provide love, support, and be accountable by helping emerging leaders be prepared, mentored, equipped, and developed to the whole-life competencies needed for effective ministry. Our cultural differences can make us be partners with Christ by nurturing CWOC during their entire time of ministry. The human situation on feminist view informs us that roundtable talk

and training is paramount in the church of Jesus Christ.[19] Feminist theology informs there is a "lack of communication between women of different races, languages, and countries.[20] It also addresses the non-hierarchical, collective work and decision-making faced by women in the church.

How can the linguistic approach factor CWOC's needs? Lack of communication, labeling, and inclusion in my context ministry deprives progress in the church of Jesus Christ. Feminist theology must be included to create awareness and identity while equipping faith leaders with spiritual tools as well as cultural competency basic knowledge. Conversely, this theology forecasts the mission of Jesus Christ making intellectual and disciplined disciples in the Kin-dom. This is where I see all people emulating Jesus' theology on the road to Emmaus mingling with strangers and sharing a meal with them. Language should not be a barrier among human beings, but it should be an influence to learn worldviews, while resourcing local church leaders to lead congregations into these intercultural encounters of theology, culture, and social identity.

The CWOC in ministry are faced with substantive issues such as lack of cultural competence and nurturing, which includes leadership protocols in a cross-cultural environment; lack of knowing the church culture, which if they are mentored and nurtured, they would remain resilient and adaptable to the conditions that they face in ministry; and being prepared will help CWOC maintain the spiritual integrity of the

---

[19] Mark Douglas and Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 75-78, Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2979/jfemistudreli.28.1.75.

[20] Voices of Sophia, "What Is Feminist Theology?" 2008, 12-18, https://voicesofsophia.Wordpress.com/what-is-feminist-theology/.

church, which supports better communication and correction on conflict resolution, a core identified issue facing the majority of CWOC in ministry.

Contemporary Scholarship of Classical and Modern Theologies

Women in contemporary churches are suffering from silent linguistic deprivation of their womanism or feminism. This was evidenced in the implementation of this project as personal experiences were shared. The CWOC fall in the same category where they are never nurtured and their souls remain alienated from the systems that could speak the truth, while CWOC remain silent in their communities making their ministry journey hard to capitulate. Today, women are speaking out to begin and incarnate the community of faith in the liberation of humanity from patriarchy — both in words and deeds.

Rosemary R. Ruether acknowledged that women in church can be as feminist exodus community. She writes, "Women-Church represents the first time that women collectively have claimed to be the church and have claimed the tradition of the exodus community as a community of liberation from patriarchy."[21]

This awareness from gathered communities must support women in their exodus. The call to nurture and prepare CWOC to cross-cultural ministry is on the rise as we see new symbols and new praxis. If these clergywomen participate in a training about a cross-cultural context, then they will be equipped to address resistance from parishioners.

Being in the theology of religion, we ought to address a segment of religious pluralism as theme that runs in cross-cultural ministry. Many scholars identify the perception of a transcendent reality as the essence or core of religion. Coogan writes that

---

[21] Ruether, *Women – Church,* 57.

"a central component of religion is what may be termed the 'divine,' or 'a reality greater than the human,[22]" while Smart explains, "A religious experience involves some kind of 'perception' of the invisible world, or involves the perception that some visible person or thing is a manifestation of the invisible world."[23] The text, 2 Corinthians 4:18 (NRSV) records, "because we look not at what can be seen but at what cannot be seen; for what can be seen is temporary, but what cannot be seen is eternal." Such a statement can be distilled into belief that religion is a human attempt to experience, understand, and live-in reference to perceived transcendent reality. Such a reality is qualitatively different from the material universe, yet its significance transcends into something both beyond and within ordinary things.

Through the lens of the world's interreligious and interfaith encounters, pluralism is present while we sensitively encounter the "other.''[24] "Can't we get along?" should be our mantra. In her book, *A Companionable Way: Path of Devotion in Conscious Love,* Lisa Hess, states, "A companionable way of being in the world begins with stories that invite deepening inner work in us all."[25] Conversely, being a pluralist is sharing those stories that bind us all together. Clergywomen of color serve as those pluralist/feminist ministers who express Jesus' love. It is having a table dinner and expressing one's view and listening to the interfaith community that might have explicit different traditions, and

---

[22] Michael D. Coogan, *The Illustrated Guide to World Religions* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 8.

[23] Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind,* 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 15.

[24] The Other– is a term that has been used to describe people whose customs, beliefs, or behavior are "different" from one's own.

[25] Lisa M Hess, *A Companionable Way: Path of Devotion in Conscious Love* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016), 32.

yet still believe in the same God. On the other hand, Mark Silk defines religious pluralism in a different but similar context. He states, religious pluralism is "a social norm and not merely a synonym for religious diversity, enables a country to exist without sectarian warfare of the persecution of religious minorities."[26] I agree with this statement. Women ministers are very vulnerable and easy to fall victims of church and religion. In this case, if religious pluralism is a social norm, then there ought to be no boundaries of freedom of speech. The CWOC find themselves surrounded with all kinds of social ills that understanding and solving all the issues evolving in their vocational ministry creates a delayed effective ministry — meaning the work of God is on hold until their statues are approved by those they serve. They have to be checked and learn their cultural differences before they can believe them (CWOC). Although the racial and ethnic tradition composition of the interreligious dialogue has become somewhat more diverse over the past two decades, similar to other modern religions, it does allow CWOC's view in practical theology as a distinct tool. Dialogue remains the tool to unite the communities that seem uncomfortable when they see a woman of color in leadership position.

Culture in our shrinking world has become less important. A case in point is Japan. Brook Peterson argues, "Despite major changes in Japan in the fifty years, the Japanese remain Japanese."[27] Culture remains a theme of dialogue. Being aware of the other's culture might promote cultural intelligence and understanding. I agree with this

---

[26] Mark Silk, "Defining Religious Pluralism in America: A Regional Analysis," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 612 (July 2007): 64-81.

[27] Brooks Peterson, *Cultural Intelligence: A Guide Working with people from other Cultures* (Boston, MA: London, UK: Intercultural Press, 2004), 84.

practical theology of dialoguing. For example, I had been serving two multicultural congregations. One church has a makeup of all white persons and the other has one black family. Including mine, we have a make-up of two black families. When I joined the congregations, I was skeptical on how they would receive me. I came knowing that was the place and space God wanted me to serve. I knew I had to listen to them, and hoping too, they would listen to me as a person of different cultural values. It was a 50/50 chance of survival. After serving for almost a year and a half, my fearful imagination faded away, although I still needed to be nurtured to be an effective leader in cross-cultural ministry. The whole first year was spent on learning the personalities and traditions of the congregants. Thence, I experienced a delayed effective ministry.

These are not the only areas of focus, but they consist of the main areas that CWOC need to be self-sufficient in their pastoral ministry. First, we will look at basic definitions of key words and perhaps they will give the reader to better understanding of what intercultural encounters bring to ministry.

Preparedness and Theological Themes

A good example is the narrative of my selected passage in Romans 16:1-16, where Pheobe is prepared and commended by Paul to a different cultural society in Rome. Phoebe must have been pleased to be prepared, commended, and introduced by Paul for being a good envoy or disciple to the ministry. Where there is a cultural difference, preparation and confirmation are required.

Culture can be defined as a set of beliefs, practices, and symbols that are learned and shared. Together they form an all-encompassing, integrated whole that binds people

together and shapes their worldview and lifeways.[28] There are several theories that CWOC must be congruent and versatile with to help prepare them for effective ministry. These include cultural intelligence, cultural competence, cultural-linguistics, and nurturing.

Cultural Intelligence

Brooks Peterson defines cultural intelligence as "the ability to engage in a set of behaviors that uses skills (i.e., language or interpersonal skills) and qualities (e.g., tolerance for ambiguity, flexibility) that are tuned appropriately to the culture-based values and attitudes of the people with whom one interacts)."[29] Cultural Intelligence as a tool guides and helps with people working from other cultures. Shaping women of color in ministry requires preparation of basic understanding on cultural intelligence. One of the heroic figures we can emulate is Ida B. Wells-Barnette, who was raised in a local Methodist Episcopal Church and attended one of its higher education schools. In her status, she fought for equal justice for the people of African descent. In a 1903 lecture titled, "the Colored Woman, "she delivered her past present and her future arguing, 'there was little employment for the Negroes, and the average Negro scarcely exceeded the domestic scale.'" After a response from the white listeners who sympathized with her remarks, Wells-Barnett answered, "we ask only that the door of opportunity be opened to

---

[28] Nina Brown, Thomas McIlwraith, and Laura Tubelle de Gonzalez*, Perspective: An open Introduction to cultural Anthropology,* Second edition, American Anthropology Association, 2020, 6, https://perspectives.americananthropology.org/.

[29] Peterson*, Cultural Intelligence*, 89.

us."[30] I agree with Wells-Barnett in her sentiment. Ethnic differences should not separate the people of God from ministry; instead, they should embrace it value.

Women of color have the same skills and tolerance and can share same social and spirituality skills that other women are capable of sharing. Women of color have same rights to attain higher education and select a theology to tell their intercultural story to all nations. Intercultural intelligence is to work with people from other cultures which CWOC have accepted as their vocation. In essence, cultural intelligence is a practical material relevant to be shared with CWOC to understand languages in the culture of the church and understanding the most approachable cultural behaviors. Therefore, cultural intelligence must be for interracial reconciliation.

Cultural Competence

Cultural competence is the ability to recognize people's different experiences and values. It is also understanding the social, economic, or political reasons why those experiences are different. The women of color come in different regions where their values differ. Being taught and nurtured in American values will help them be able to lead effectively and empathize or build stronger relationships in their ministries. Instead of focusing on cultural competence (skills), I prefer to use cultural relativism — the idea that seeks to understand another person's beliefs and behavior in respect to their own culture, which might bring about humility. Thus, humility is found in competence and competence is found is humility. Immigrants of various culture are open to participate in

---

[30] Rosemary Skinner Keller, ed., *Spirituality and Social Responsibility: Vocational Vision of Women in the United Methodist Tradition* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1993), 153.

ministry learning as well as discovering how the other cultures mingle and relate to their communities and their churches. They are humble and ready to learn. For them, culture can be taught anywhere, even if it is a community coffee shop. The cross cultural women of color seemingly can be prepared as simple as a meeting with a mentor or a coach in a coffee shop.

In the *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures*, a passage teaches that "women also are appointed (constitui) in the ministry of the church (in ministerio ecclesiae). Phoebe was placed (positam) in that office in the church that is at Cenchreae."[31] In this case, Paul honors Pheobe with great praise and commendation, even enumerating her splendid deeds and saying, "She has helped everyone so much, that is, she served in all necessary matters, such that she even assisted me myself in my necessities and in my apostolic labors with total dedication of mind."[32]

Church diversity calls for educational activities that bond the congregation together with their minister. For the ministries of the church to be fruitful, cultural competence is required for both clergy and laity. To be culturally competent, we must accept the encounter with others. Jesus is the best example of cultural competence. He associated himself with all kinds of women and some became the best disciples. Jesus' practical theology is seen in his relationship with Martha and Mary. Jesus' theology is all the "Martha's" and the "Mary's" — both to be taught and prepared for Christ's mission. Jesus believes in teaching all women of all cultures.

---

[31] Anne L. Clark, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 45, no. 1 (2019): 1-28.

[32] Anne L. Clark, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 45, no. 1 (2019): 1-28.

Cultural Linguistics

Cultural linguistics is a "culture or language that establishes its own meaning system through its rules."[33] The CWOC's struggle is in cultural linguistic. Although no one can prepare the other on cultural linguistic, it is upon the leaders to prepare their clergy before sending them out to cross cultural ministry. I do not want to call it language barrier, but I want to mention that CWOC tend to be corrected on how they speak more of a dialect issue and presumably everyone has an accent. The most common question is "Did you learn English in your country?" Ironically, women of color are citizens of the same country (America) of the those they are ministering to. The dilemma is that such questions are posed to CWOC from the Asian, African, Indian, Mexican, and Hispanic/ Latinos' regions. Surprisingly, those from the European countries escape that question. Could this be classism or racism? I am not sure. However, assumption of one's theology is that a common mistake creates barriers in a non-cultural congruent spaces. A mentor in such cases becomes a necessity to demonstrate the different theologies that separates the two worldviews.

Many CWOC face many church conflicts due to cultural linguistics. A case in point is CWOC new to a congregation that has work to be done and needs help. Her cultural way of communication is to remain silent without asking for help. The white congregation she is serving does not offer any help. They leave her alone. Eventually the CWOC, in a meeting says, "I did all the work, and nobody came to help me." The response from the white culture is, "Well you did not ask. How are we supposed to know you needed help? Clergywomen want to remain humble, civil, and caring. Their world

---

[33] McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 78.

cultural view is that we do not ask for help, but we expect the other side to practically see things and know when help is needed and due. This is a cultural behavior that CWOC do not anticipate. Instead, they work in silence, while they lack self-care and face burnout. Jesus' theology was that he knew what was on the mind of His disciples. He repeatedly taught his disciples about the Kingdom of God. He prepared his disciples about his death to the point of sharing a last supper together. If CWOC are properly prepared through the usage of a cross-cultural training model, then they will be better equipped to pastor congregations of all ethnicities (races). Support from leadership team, mentors, and coaches from the experienced pastors of the church spending quality time with CWOC would help the new pastors as they journey into new cross-cultural ministries. Preparing CWOC creates theology of hope by working through conflict resolutions that emerges often in CC/CR appointments. Women of color possess innate strength that enlivens them to lead effectively if prepared and supported.

Nurturing

The term "growth in nurturing" is the spoken of in feminism writings, describing it, "as a need to support and nurture and empower from healing while creating relationship or mutual understanding and reciprocal."[34] There is nothing greater in ministry than preparing and nurturing leaders in any ministry setting or institution. Researching and studying congregations that view clergywomen as a mismatch exposes the weaknesses and the dilemma to CWOC. Because the laity lacks proper nurturing and lack of cross-cultural awareness, they can cause harm to clergywomen who are

[34] McKim, *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*, 217.

vulnerable and are silent in their congregational leadership. As a result, clergywomen tend to react based on their instinct. There is a lack of interest in trying new things because people feel insecure. Nurturing laity and listening to clergy women will create confidence in working and respecting one another's culture.

The fear is that "outsiders" will come and change their customs or traditions. This is one reason to nurture and prepare clergy for what is to unfold in their cross-cultural ministry. I have worked and nurtured many people in both my health profession and the community. Nurturing and preparing people on a one-on-one basis is a proven tool to undercut fear in people who are good leaders and yet they fear because they are not comfortable with a leader of different cultural values. Holy conversations will get the dialogues started in the local church while leading to Christian nurturing.

This project calls for preparation of those called to serve in foreign lands. Reflecting from the scholarship writings of Asa G. Hillard, *The Reawakening of the African Mind,* womanish behavior is a language that was depicted culturally among the African families. As Hillard contends,

> Symbol, analogies, and ritual were used profusely and were indispensable to the process. Such strategies embody the best of what is now known as advanced forms of pedagogy used everywhere in the world. For example, in analogies, we go from known to unknown. In symbols, we consolidate and synthesize knowledge and produce abstract vehicles to access that knowledge. Rituals develop a base of shared knowledge as well as social bonds.[35]

Hillard's scholarship focuses of educating cultural groups that impact learners on cultural aspects. My doctoral project's position is to have people as such to nurture the

---

[35] Asa G. Hillard, III, *SBA: The Reawakening of the African Mind* (Gainesville, FL: Makare Publishing Company, 1997), 10.

CWOC while transforming them to be effective women in church leadership. The value of culture exemplifies theology through sound teaching and nurturing.

Reflection and Conclusion:

The relevance of effective ministry has to be inaugurated in developing a foundation for readiness by preparing leaders and nurturing them as good candidates for cross-cultural ministry. I submit that the foundations of successful leadership commence with solid personal theology, self- awareness, self-care, and self-determination. Self-awareness as a theological individual discovery creates an identity to seeking help in leadership preparedness. It is necessary to know self-boundaries and other parameters surrounding one's ministry. It is not enough to assume based on definitions, race, gender, or creed. Thus, I contend that the theologies of womanist, feminist, and practical theologies be recognized and applied in cross-cultural ministerial settings. The preparedness model will begin the process of forgiveness, healing, and restorations among women from subjected pain, fear, silence, and suffering that are imposed by the "other" culture viewed as a "better culture in society

The majority of CWOC suffer inwardly, and this suffering creates a delayed effect on ministry than their counterparts, white clergywomen. I believe that self-awareness has boosted researcher's cross-cultural ministry by having a coach and mentor in the area of CC appointments. The support of having a mentor has nurtured and prepared me to learn and share my love to all those who saw me as different. Self-discovery and training, while in pursuit of my vocation in ministerial leadership, not only has elevated my understanding of cultural differences, but it has also created room to

listen and engage in round-table discussions when conflict seems to be “stealing” the joy of my ministry.

We explained the womanist theologies that can elevate our understanding. The CWOC leaders need to understand biblical interpretation of womanist and feminist theologies while applying practical theology for effective leadership. Cultural intelligence must be the lead model to apply with the integration of womanist, feminist, and practical theologies regardless of race, sexual orientation, and other forces that deprive women of color from leading effectively. This theme helped the researcher to create a cross- cultural theology which is interwoven together with other theologies.

Therefore, collaboration in the church of Christ becomes the true love Jesus was teaching to all who followed him. It is salient to understand within a community of women of color that adopting a theology that is supportive to pedagogical practices creates effective church leadership. Tools like cultural intelligence, cultural competence, and cultural-linguistics dimensions, when tied together, succinctly prepares learners and create a woven thread that promotes effective leadership. This leads to helping researcher explore further in this theological foundation some interdisciplinary school of thoughts. This segment intersects and solidifies the role of CWOC in cross-cultural settings.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERDISCIPLINARY FOUNDATIONS

Introduction

Being an immigrant and serving in a cross-cultural/cross-racial appointment[1] prompted me to investigate cultural disparities that occur and how humanity can understand one another. This interdisciplinary chapter will discuss dialogues between the church and society to develop the intercultural encounters in the Michigan Conference of United Methodist Church. The project theme is "Intercultural Encounter: Developing A Model That Prepares Clergywomen of Color For Cross Cultural Leadership Ministry."

The selected interdisciplinary discipline is Cultural Anthropology and theory of cross-cultural communication added to provide a fundamental preparation and readiness for cross-cultural ministry. Both provide concreate evidence as it relates to cultural competence, cultural intelligence, and cultural communication thus formulating a thread to prove the model of Cultural intelligence (CIM) — as tied in the biblical, theological, and historical foundations chapters.

This chapter investigates cultural anthropology as the (interdisciplinary field) while engaging communications theory to allow for a dialogue between church and society. This segment intersects the role of CWOC in cross-cultural settings. The cultural

[1] Cross-cultural/cross-racial characterizes an appointment of a minister whose world view (i.e., values, instincts, beliefs, myths, religious behavior) are different from the majority race (Western).

anthropology comparisons draw research of systems, perceptions, and intercultural communication. The discussion is in the lens of the relative issues facing clergywomen of various cultures such as African American, Native Americans, Indians, Asians, multiracial, and Hispanics in institutions perceived to be the minority.

This project intersects through understanding cultural anthropology as the ideal discipline and communications theory in contextual spaces of leadership. Cultural anthropology can be defined as the "study of humans and their behavior."[2] To understand anthropology, we take a broader approach of understanding the many different aspects of the human experience. In this case, we observe communities as they exist today, while understanding their practices from an insider's perspective. We look at the question why people act and look so differently in religious institutions and what do we have in common; at the same time, we look at the linguistic anthropology, a subfield of anthropology that provides a multi-faceted picture of human conditions. Concisely, we compare the parallel characteristics and cultural dimensions of communication and the implications for cross-cultural interaction in our societies. Our aim of selecting this discipline is to also be able to understand and perhaps solve specific practice problems in collaboration with our communities in context settings concerning cultural variation among humans. Moreover, we investigate how people can use language to communicate, make meaning, and organize social actions in all social groups of contexts while learning the cultural attitudes that exist.[3] The process of selecting the cultural anthropology

---

[2] American Anthropology Association, https://americananthro.org/learn-teach/what-is-anthropology/.

[3]American Anthropology Association, https://americananthro.org/learn-teach/what-is-anthropology/.

interdisciplinary study for this research pivoted the core value of preparedness. The theory examines the interaction between people with different perceptions, individuals, and groups in different leadership roles.

Overall, the project is designed to look at how humanity relate to each other in their church/institution setting creating a diverse framework of living together as all God's children. The leading question to be asked then is: "does culture change with the environment and what is culture?

Nina Brown et al, defines culture as:

> A set of beliefs, practices, and symbols that are learned and shared. Together, they form an all-encompassing, integrated whole that binds groups of people together and shapes their worldview and lifeways.[4]

The church, like other institutions, face specific problems that we are seeking answers to as to how human behaviors are socially learned and communicated. It is inevitable to study this cultural variation. The Michigan Area Conference (MAC) abides by *The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church*, a guide to doing ministry. The function of the local church states,

> . . . under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is to help people to accept and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and to live their daily lives in light of their relationship with God. Therefore, the local church is to minister to persons in the community where the church is located, to provide appropriate training and nurture to all, to cooperate in ministry with other local churches, to defend God's creation and live as an ecological responsible community, and to participate in the whole worldwide mission of the church as minimal expectations of an authentic church.[5]

---

[4] Nina Brown, Thomas McIlwraith, and Laura Tubelle de González, *Perspectives: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology*, Second ed., American Anthropological Association (Arlington VA: American Anthropological Association, 2020), 7.

[5] *The United Methodist Church Book of Discipline* (Nashville, TN: United Methodist Church Publishing House, 2016), 147-148.

The phrases echoed "train and nurture to all," "defend God's creation," and "participate in whole worldwide mission" are significant. It is to affirm that CWOC are to be nurtured daily while they serve in communities of different values. If the ministry is to be authentic, then appropriate nurturing is required to achieve Jesus's Christ's mission of building relationships. The theory of cultural anthropology is appropriate to support the above quote for the UMC churches.

An Investigation of Cultural Anthropology

Cultural anthropology is a branch of anthropology focused on the study of cultural variation among humans which is in contrast to social anthropology.[6] We are only focusing on cultural anthropology for this project. Briefly around 164-113 BC, one of the pioneers of cultural anthropology was Hanzhong, a military officer who was assigned to Central Asia, today known as Uzbekistan.[7] He first attempted to study the system and document cultural differences. Also, we encounter another traveler, Abu Addullah Muhammed, mostly widely known as Ibn Battuta (1304-1369). He traveled in Africa and around the world studying customs and traditions of various social groups. On the other hand, anthropologist Herbart Spencer, as a social scientist of the early nineteenth century, used the model of evolution to understand the social and civilization of human beings. He argued that in all societies, though complex, there was progress in the social compass of human development.[8] Through participant observation, people's culture was not "savage"

---

[6] Brown, McIlwraith, and de González, *Perspectives*, 6.

[7] Brown, McIlwraith, and de González, *Perspectives*, 8.

[8] Brown, McIlwraith, and de González, *Perspectives*, 9.

but was well-suited to fulfil the needs of the people in a society. Hence, the development of cultural diversity would enhance cultural functions satisfying the needs of the people. This affirms that human beings varied from ancient times and the social variations still exists today. As the CWOC migrate to a new environment and join ministry, they bring their cultural differences and will need a Cultural Intelligence Model (CIM) to be a good feat in a culture that is different from their own. Attempting to understand other cultures of different experiences creates more open-minded ways. Cultural relativism embraced by an American anthropologist, Fraz Boas, saw that behavioral differences among racial and ethnic groups in the United States shaped social conditions and argued the distinct realms of human behavior was learned.[9] Boas argues that human behaviors are socially learned; they are contextual and flexible but not innate. I agree with this sentiment that if CWOC are put in a different social environment and are prepared, nurtured, and mentored, they will be able to adapt to the crucible change. Culture then can be both direct and indirect.

Understanding the term "culture" leads us to ask this question. Is culture both direct and indirect? Culture is symbolic and through culture there is communication among people. Jesus walking to Emmaus, Jesus riding on a donkey, and Jesus teaching the sermon on the Mount clearly illustrates the different cultures Jesus intermingled with. Culture helps social groups to learn directly and indirectly while responding to internal and external factors. For example, the different women whom Jesus encountered had origins from different cultures. Matthew lists four non-Hebrew women in the genealogy of Jesus: Rehab, Ruth, Tamar, and Bethsheba. These women represented the Gentile

---

[9] Brown, McIlwraith, and de González, *Perspectives*, 10.

nations. Tamar is likely a Canaanite. Ruth is a Moabite. Rahab was a Gentile. Bathsheba was believed to be a Canaanite or a Hittite (cf. Gen. 31:6-30;1 Chron. 2:3-4). Each of these women presents a nation united with Israel — through Christ the Messiah.

Through their difference in culture, there is communication among groups of people. Jesus is clear and creates the racial/cultural parity significant through his ancestry. Like women of color appointed to ministries of different cultures, the Asian American, African, Black American, Hispanics, Native Americans, and multiracial, all the different racial ethnics bring with them a culture that is totally different in the environment they are serving. Both the western and the non-western cultures will definitely clash if nurturing and mentoring is lacking. If CWOC are properly prepared through the usage of a cross-cultural training model, then they will be better equipped to pastor congregations of all ethnicities (races).

The degree to which humans relate to culture distinguishes humanity from other creatures like animals. Humans have a shared meaning of symbols within a given society. For example, some people in America view the confederate flag as a “symbol of heritage and pride” while others see it as a symbol of “slavery, segregation, and racial oppression.” Consequently, cultural symbols convey a message that affect our environment and societies both directly and indirectly. The twenty first century is changing the culture of women in society rapidly. All institutions are experiencing a different cultural variation and CWOC are not far behind. They are tapping into societies that are different. They contemplate the origin of society itself and are proposing that people come out of relative isolation and form societies that are hospitable and inviting to all people’s intersectionality.

Many scholars identify the perception of a transcendent reality as the essence or core of religion. Coogan writes that "a central component of religion is what may be termed the 'divine,' or 'a reality greater than the human,'"[10] while Smart explains, "A religious experience involves some kind of 'perception' of the invisible world or involves the perception that some visible person or thing is a manifestation of the invisible world."[11] Such statements can be distilled into my belief that our social cultural differences make us look for the things we do not see. Humans attempt to experience, understand, and live-in reference to perceived transcendent reality. Such a reality is qualitatively different from the material universe, yet its significance transcends into something that is both beyond and within ordinary cultural functions.

Interdisciplinary Theory: Cross-cultural Communication Theory (CCCT)

The interdisciplinary theory of cross-cultural communication theory increases room for dialogue and holy conversations[12] among different societies. This theory interacts with the project theme of intercultural encounter and supports nuances of pedagogical strategies of Biblical, Theological and Historical Foundations of nurturing and preparedness of CWOC in their ministerial leadership. Communication is versatile and it comes in different forms such as language and nonverbal behavior, language and thinking, language and perceptions, and language and social relations. Romans 16:1-16 is

---

[10] Michael D. Coogan, *The Illustrated Guide to World Religions* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press. 2003), 8.

[11] Ninian Smart, *The Religious Experience of Mankind*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1984), 15.

[12] Note: Holy Conversation is talking about God in everyday life and experience.

the text I used to support and undergird this project, and it supported the intersectionality of this chapter. Paul was clear in his thinking that he had to communicate with the people that Pheobe was to meet. Paul communicated forcefully to introduce Pheobe before she would go on the mission. Paul in Romans 16: 2 describes Pheobe as a "patron" or "benefactor." However, there is no English equivalent to this Greek word that is accurate enough. Many scholars would just interpret or translate it as a "ruler," "manager," or "leader." In understanding Paul's way of communication, we find the verb "*prostatis*," a word that is found once in the New Testament as authority being given to Pheobe. In this situation, Pheobe is being prepared so that those in Rome should understand that Pheobe has the authority to bring the message to them. It is to this understanding that CWOC need to be nurtured, prepared, and equipped for their ministry. Like Pheobe, who is commended and prepared to go to Rome, if CWOC are properly prepared through the usage of a cross-cultural training model, then they will be better equipped to pastor congregations of all ethnicities (races).

What is Cultural Intelligence Model (CIM)

A cultural intelligence model is important to understanding issues faced by CWOC because it provides a viewpoint that focuses on cross cultural communication and leadership. This subset of communication will guide the investigation as to why cross-cultural communication theory plays a major role in the research project, but first one must understand key elements of communication theory which will be explained using the cultural intelligence model.

This model attempts to orient and help to understand the capability of a group or an organization that functions effectively in situations or environments characterized by cultural diversity. Although the global world seeks the emergence of diversification of languages, some societies today are still not ready to accept or learn other social and cultural identities.[13] As such, cultural misunderstanding creates gaps in the mission of the church.

How Differing Cultural Styles Leads to Misunderstandings

Does cultural leadership style create misunderstanding? One would say yes. Language and nonverbal behavior, language and thinking, language and perceptions, and language and social relations play a major role in cross cultural communication styles. Understanding the definition of culture would be appropriate for groups to collaborate on cultural variations. Succinctly, "cultural relativism" is the idea that we seek to understand another person's beliefs and behaviors from the perspective of their own culture and not the perceived other. For example, being an African, my cultural understanding is quite different from the American culture. One case in particular from an African perspective is how respect is rendered. Ironically, one is not to look at a superior directly in the eye. The allusion is direct eye contact is lack of respect for the elder or supervisor from an African standpoint. However, the American understanding is to look someone directly in their eye. American cultural aspect is perceived as respect, and one is perceived to be listening to them. I experienced this prior to becoming a pastor when I was involved in church leadership. My pastor was talking to me, and I did not have a direct eye contact. He

---

[13] Brown, McIlwraith, and de González, *Perspectives*, 13.

became so upset with me and called me "very rude." How I wished he had let me explain my cultural perspective! Perhaps we both could have learned something from each other. This perception and behavior can be misconstrued. In this case, I agree that cultural relativism was in full swing and applied. The pastor wanted me to understand his culture; however, he had no point of understanding mine. Nonverbal behavior creates the authentication of cultural disparities. I felt that "ethnocentrism" existed in this case. The intercultural encounter with the pastor was viewed that only his own culture was important and correct: unlike the "other." Drawing from this example, we identify the need to prepare those who bring migrant different cultures to a different space in a cross-cultural ministry setting. If CWOC are properly prepared through the usage of a cross-cultural training model, then they will be better equipped to pastor congregations of all ethnicities (races). Language differentiation and thinking can create separation in thinking and understanding.

Knowing your Cultural Style of Communication

According to scholarship research, Miles and Proeschold argue that women in ministry will continue to encounter prejudice and even hostility until their experiences with the challenges they face in ministry are addressed.[14] Being better prepared, trained, and equipped for developing impartiality in ministry and re-examining unique behaviors related to cultural styles are rampant. For the CWOC to be able to understand their cultural style of communication, their effectiveness amounts to leading the church with

---

[14] A. Miles and R. J. Proeschold-Bell, "Are Rural Clergy Worse Off? An Examination of Occupational Conditions and Pastoral Experiences in a Sample of United Methodist Clergy," *Sociology of Religion* 73, no. 6 (2012): 23-4.

increased support and nurturing.[15] That brings us to the style of communication in our religious institutions. Pastoral images and perceptions differ from denomination to the other. In his book, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity: A guide for clergy and congregations,* Ken Warden asserts, "The United States has a long and complex history of discrimination against people of color. In fact, the church in the U.S. has been one of the major perpetrators of the many injustices against vulnerable populations."[16] My intent is not to speak about racism but address the receptions CWOC receive in cross-cultural ministry. Walden's sentiment is to envision and be open to what people of color undergo in distinct institutions where they are in the minority. I can dovetail myself into such an environment with my identity and experiences.

Understanding communication styles helps any minister to lead effectively. The communication styles to be addressed include self-awareness. Being self-aware of the do's and the don'ts and mapping your congregation can solve a lot of miscommunication among clergy and congregants. The CWOC are prone to vulnerability if their strength is forged in a non-self-reflection. Without self-awareness, many want to avoid vulnerability, and yet they fall to be victims of vulnerability due to misconstrued communication. In his book *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change,* Tod. Bolsinger uses an example of communication narrated by Thomas Merton. On his scholarship about forming leaders, Merton writes,

> The one who attempts to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening their own self-understanding, freedom, integrity, and capacity to love

---

[15] D. Newkirk and B. S. Cooper, "Preparing Women for Baptist Church Leadership: Mentoring Impact on Beliefs and of Females Ministers,*" Journal of Research on Christian Education* 22, no. 8 (2013): 323-43.

[16] Ken J. Walden*, Practical Theology for Church Diversity: A guide for clergy and congregations* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 90.

> Christ, will not have anything to give to others. They will communicate to others nothing but the contagion of their own obsessions, their aggressiveness, their ego-centered ambitions, their delusions about ends and means, their doctrinaire prejudices and ideas.[17]

Drawing from this quote, I agree with Menton that the strength in communication style lies within the self-reflection of the pastor and at the same time those being pastored. Leadership requires self-understanding and resilience, especially in cases of vulnerability.

The other style of cultural communication is body or tone language. While body language can be misconceived as lack of respect, some societies take the usage of excessive body movement as being a destruction. A case in point would be those from the Japanese and Africans cultures who might respond silently by nodding their heads in agreement to the situation before them. The western counterpart, especially Americans, value deeply spoken language. For example, in the African culture, hands are shaken as a sign of respect and acknowledgement. This is the tradition that is valued in their society. Greeting the elders with a handshake or even bowing in acknowledging their presence is what is perceived as respect. In contrast, the American communication style is verbal with words of "hi" and keep it moving. It takes some time for an immigrant to learn this cultural aspect of how greetings are exchanged in the different cultures. Verbal and nonverbal behaviors in our society can be miscommunicated. The "foreigner" might feel intimidated and unwanted based on the response received. On the other hand, the western might see the other culture as "uncivilized." But both parties can meet in the middle and teach each other what their culture is all about. Unlike the different variation of norms

---

[17] Tod Bolsinger, *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020), 78.

that exist, CWOC must adjust to the new culture or else they are perceived as doing something wrong in the new environment. These few examples explain the basic use of verbal and non-verbal behavior in society and church institutions today.

The other communication style is "pitch voice and tone." The CWOC are judged based on the way they communicate. The majority of CWOC are judged by the pitch of their voices. Imagine tone being an issue in ministry. Language and speech are something one could never consider to be an issue in ministry. A congregation that is all aging wants a soft voice. But clergywomen of color have a "dialect" issue. Speaking softly, one is not going to pronounce certain words accurately. A high-pitched voice does not mean the person is "loud or rude." Perceptions are that loud speaking is overboard; therefore, CWOC are judged that being loud is unfit and unacceptable to the calm soft voices they like to hear. This might seem to be basic elements, but we bring this issues to prove the importance of preparedness for those called in cross cultural ministry. Being self-aware and using cultural competence understanding will save the "foreigner"[18] from a lot of cultural shock and conflict.

The other communication that immigrants, in this case CWOC, adopt in their ministry is "creative silence."[19] Many CWOC become contemplative and choose to remain silent for fear of being judged as an "unfit" leader in the environment that is so different. Many leaders want to maintain the spiritual integrity of the church. The goal is silence would help avoid conflict in the church. Thus, they resort to remain silent even though they have the authority to lead effectively. On one hand, they want to be resilient

---

[18] Note: One perceived to be an immigrant minority with different beliefs and values.

[19] Note: This is a mood where one becomes silent to themselves and not share what they are going through in the vocational ministry.

and adaptable to change. However, circumstances they undergo for not being prepared leave them in silence and solitude.

In his book, *Essential Writings,* Thomas Merton contends,

> Silence has many dimensions. It can be a regression and an escape, a loss of self, or it can be presence, awareness, unification, self-discovery. Negative silence blurs and confuses our identity, and we lapse into daydreams or diffuse anxieties. Positive silence pulls us together and makes us realize who we are, who we might be, and the distance between these two. Hence, positive silence implies a disciplined choice, and what Paul Tillich called the 'courage to be.' In the long run the discipline of creative silence demands a kind of faith.[20]

The CWOC are haunted with positive and negative silence all the time in their ministry. Reflecting on Merton's argument, I agree that women of color are classified to be struggling with their faith due to the demands of social identity around their ministry. The end results put the majority of CWOC in the "creative silence," and for the most part, it is the negative. From my experience, CWOC come face to face with hard core questions regarding their vocation and at times they are unable to diffuse all the anxieties that surround them in ministry. They are mostly immersed in a "flood of racket," diffusing their consciousness that stand to be half diluted. In other words, the "thinking language" is less visible and they are not fully present in the ministry due to the invoked silence.[21]

I highly recommend clergy mentorship and nurturing for all those in CCCR ministry. Many CWOC lag behind in CCCR pastoral ministry and at times they have to play catch up compared to their counterpart clergy white women. This not only affect their leadership but also creates delayed ministry as compared to their counterpart clergy

---

[20] Thomas Merton, *Essential Writings*, Modern Spiritual Master Series (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000), 74.

[21] Merton, *Essential Writings*, 74.

white women who blend easily in their own cultural societies. Ken Warden explains the world of struggle that clergywomen of color undergo in cross cultural ministry. He writes,

> A growing number of people across United States, including church members, have a lower level of respect and a higher level of suspicion toward clergy. The pastoral role does not inspire the same honor or reverence as it did in the past.[22]

The question then is why do people behave the way they behave toward a stranger, especially a spiritual leader who is to help them grow spiritually? I have no answer yet to this question. But the perception is that cultural intelligence and competence is so much needed in today's ministerial contexts. Many women of color are choosing ministry as the demands for pastors are on an increase. This brings me to echo theologian Brian McLaren's recommendations that he gives to a congregation receiving a new pastor. I will only use one example. He writes,

> Thou shalt not come to the new pastor with demands, pressure, complaints, bad reports, manipulations, threats, agendas, unsolicited advice, or snide comments. But thou shall say, 'welcome! How can we help you? We love you!'[23]

The quote above illustrates the communication-language thinking that clergy women face. I agree with Brian McLaren's scholarship regarding clergy treatment. One would assume a stranger will be well received but that is not what is happening to the CWOC in the church of Jesus' Christ. It is the opposite of what is provided in the McLaren quote. Humanity's behavior is not to the level of Jesus' church where a stranger is welcome and the love for a neighbor is extended whole heartedly.

---

[22] Ken J. Walden, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity*: *A guide for clergy and congregations* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 44.

[23] Warden, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity,* 45-46.

Cultural Traits for Success

Communication is a key component in ministry. In his book, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity*, Ken J. Walden, writes,

> Two-way communication is a key factor for success during the welcome introduction phase. There should be dedicated time for a dialogue rather than a solely monologue.[24]

A perceived introduction to parishioners is very important. Many CWOC do not get that time for introduction. In the case of UMC, a clergy receives a call from the superintendent, and she is given twenty-four hours to pray about the appointment and respond. The next decision is to say "yes," then you have a church to lead or say "no," and there is no church-to-pastor conversation. Due to the limited time given, one is unable to gather information and prepare for the new appointment. The congregants do not know the new clergy and vice versa. In this difficult task, a clergy is appointed in a cross-cultural appointment and has no time to learn the "norms" or culture of the new church. From my experience, the first six months are what I call "sweet ordeal," and the months thereafter are what I call a "cultural shock." The shock results in the cultural misunderstanding between the two parties. For example, cross-cultural pastors are eager to learn, adopt, and build relationships among the people they serve within the CCCR ministry. However, the other side might not have the patience. They want things done according to their culture. to how they know it and to how they perceive it. For the new CWOC, it is a dilemma to succumb to the resistance. To quote Ken Walden's words, "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words can never hurt me."[25] The CWOC

---

[24] Walden, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity*, 51.

[25] Walden, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity,* 53.

will attest to this phrase. I disagree with Walden claims. In my own experiences, along with my cohort CWOC, I confirm that words can hurt emotionally and at the same time can heal. Hospitality for a stranger in a cross-cultural ministry seems to last just for a very short season. There is lack of proper communication, and CWOC feel unwelcome, unvalued, or unwanted. Cross cultural ministry requires people of God to exercise patience, Christian love, faith in the spirit, and truth in practical ways of God's command to love the neighbor with inclusivity.[26] Pastors are judged in the very early days of their appointment. If pastors appointed into CCCR are well prepared about the encounters of the new ministry, both the church community and the new minister would focus on establishing relationships while learning each other's norm and values to the glory of Jesus's mission.

Relevance to my Context

This interdisciplinary chapter informs my DMin project that if both the leaders and the church bring their strengths to the table of leadership development, they will be fulfilling the call of Jesus Christ himself of loving thy neighbor. As believers, we must remember that we are not the church, nor the bride of Christ, but we are servants of Christ. We are to assist, train, and resource — not meddle in Christ's affairs and undermine Christ's leadership. We must reach out to Christ and regain relevancy in the preparation of Christ's leaders. The local body of Christ can provide the love, support, and accountable communities where emerging leaders can be mentored, test their gifts, and develop the whole-life competencies needed for effective ministry.

---

[26] Walden, *Practical Theology for Church Diversity*, 52-53.

Our cultural differences can make us be partners with Christ, embedding CWOC during their entire time of ministry. The lack of understanding cultural communication and inclusion in contextual ministry deprives progress in the church of Jesus Christ. Communicating with CWOC creates awareness and identity while equipping faith leaders with spiritual tools as well as cultural competency basic knowledge. Conversely, this discipline forecasts the mission of Jesus Christ making intellectual and disciplined disciples in the field. It is to this understanding that I see all people emulating Jesus' culture on the road to Emmaus mingling with strangers and sharing a meal with them. Language should not be a trait of human beings but should be an influence to learn world views, while resourcing local church leaders to lead congregations into these intercultural encounters of culture and social identity.

John Wesley, the Methodist historical founder, communicated with is followers and made training and nurturing a must for his pastors. Remember that Wesley believed that holy conferencing instituted means of grace. The Reverend John Wesley believed that this practice was one of five practices that God instituted as a way that God's grace would be made available to us. In *Holy Conferencing: A Presentation to the Council of Bishops of the United Methodist Church,* Kevin M. Wat*son* writes how John Wesley saw Christian conferencing as a way of communication.

> Are we convinced how important and how difficult it is to order our conversation right? Is it always in grace? Seasoned with salt? Meet to minister grace to the hearers? Do we not converse too long at a time? Is not an hour at a time commonly enough? Would it not be well to plan our conversation beforehand? To pray before and after it?[27]

---

[27] John Wesley, "The Large Minutes," *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 10. The Methodist Societies, The Minutes of Conference, ed. Henry D. Rack (Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2011), 855-857.

I agree that holy conferencing can be a luminal tool for communication, and if the church is preparing those in CCCR ministry through training of holy conferencing, then clergywomen or color will lead effectively.

Ultimately, too many cultures in the U.S., especially in Michigan Area Conference, are in conflict because of the lack of cross-cultural communication. The lack of proper communication, which is a key ingredient in effective collaboration in ministry, creates cultural shock and conflict. It is to this understanding that I identify with and point out the need for dialogue through CIM. Courageous leaders must stand against ethnicity divisions that put the church of Jesus Christ in disarray.

Conclusion

I have addressed the different tyles of communication. Self-awareness, use of body language, pitch and tone of voice, and creative silence. Understanding these styles of communication along with adhering to successful traits in ministry will create more cultural awareness that can create relational understanding in the church. This thesis' premise and study result reflect the importance of clergy preparedness to CCCR ministry. This is why integrating an interdisciplinary approach and theory like of cultural anthropology and cross-cultural Communication theory are important in offering a cultural encounter of a cultural intelligence model (CIM). This underscores that the holy conversations can create space for learning different cultures and at the same time invite parties to listen and accept one another in God's ministry. A congruent holy conversation opens dialogue that can help clergy lead effectively. Hence, intercultural preparedness is an equal opportunity for church growth, unity, and diversity.

I have addressed the components of human behaviors and the cross-cultural communication theory. In the narrative strategies of clergywomen, we examined patterns reflected in personal barriers among cultures and interrogated those socio-culturally situated — identity reflected by these patterns of communication. It is important to identify the transformation that reveals itself as participants strive to negotiate between personal identities, priorities, and the requirements concerning language, both verbal and nonverbal expression, and even silence in their vocation. In order for CWOC to excel in contextual ministries, disciplinary and ecclesial discourse within communities, cross-cultural communication theories embedded in holy conversation, cultural competence, and cultural intelligence must not be overlooked. Intercultural encounter calls for CCCR ministry preparedness.

The use of cultural anthropology and cross-cultural communication modalities are useful because they prepare and shape CWOC to be cultural congruent and competent. This Competence Intelligence Model is helpful as it helps the reader understand human behavior that leaves a set group of people vulnerable based on individual cultural beliefs, norms, and values. The discipline selected enhances the studying of human behavior and their communication paradigm. The theory also gives a foundation for further research on how the church should be more aware in correcting barriers that separates God's children from being good neighbors to each other. This disciplinary chapter is very influential to the DMIN project as it enabled me as the researcher to complete and analyze the project data that can help solve the stated problem.

CHAPTER SIX

PROJECT ANALYSIS

Introduction

This final chapter will review the project and analyze the data for a cohort of clergywomen of color, (African Americans, Africans, Hispanics, and Asians), who participated in this study. The hypothesis of this research project is if clergywomen of color are properly prepared, then they will be effective in serving within the cross-cultural ministries of different ethnicities. It was from the Synergy and Spiritual Autobiography chapters of this doctoral program that my Synergy/Ministry Focus chapter came forth with this project idea, design, and implementation. My beliefs and nurturing derived from my mother, mentors around me, the historical theologian John Wesley's teachings, all of whom played key roles in my development. They all provided nurturing and support systems that I could emulate. This empowerment not only became a call for me to be a servant leader but also it provided encouragement to empower people, especially of color, so that they can also be self-sufficient. My mother molded me as a young girl to stand up and help others. I was that girl who led Sunday school in my home church. I led as a youth worship leader who led songs in worship services and that woman who empowered women in community to further their education. I still possess that passion for ministry.

My God-given spiritual gifts of leadership, discernment, and prophesy affirmed that I have the stamina to empower others for the betterment of their growth in any institution and even the church. Leadership skills were instilled in me while I was a youth; throughout my life, I led others from bottom to top. My business management skills and health care skills contributed to leading different ethnicities. It was the nurturing that I received that made me want to share and prepare other women of color.

I identified foundational support that undergirds cultural beliefs and values in cross-cultural leadership as an integral skill that enhanced the training and preparation of cross-cultural ministry. What proved more salient for me is that CWOC in their leadership are resilient, bold, compassionate, adaptable, and possess spiritual integrity. They understand that from a human perspective, certain norms and values must be followed. The landscape of diversity and inclusivity has always reminded me of my passion. Like Confucius, "the teacher, echoes spiritual wellbeing of people-maintained harmony between the community and the natural leader who reanimate this tradition can pass it onto to succeeding generations."[1] Setting lofty standards of learning others' behavior help prepare students and the leaders in ministry. History records that well prepared and trained leaders are emotionally and spiritually strong to overcome any hardship before them in ministry.

The theme text of the project found in Romans 16 provides a road map of how the Apostle Paul become the best teacher and prepared Pheobe for the long and perilous journey before her. The missionary Phoebe is set to embark on a long journey. However,

---

[1] Ames T. Rogers, *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophy Translation*, trans. Henry Rosemont, Jr. (New York, NY: Ballantine Books, the Random House Publishing Group, 1998), 3.

she is not sure if she can conduct the task assigned by Paul. She has the courage and faith that she can go to a foreign land, serve, and carry the scroll as assigned by her leader Paul. In this instance, we see the intersectionality of our biblical foundations' themes of readiness and preparation to ministry. Championing this ministry, Paul understood the role of preparedness as an exemplary way of personal bond to ministry. Paul supported Pheobe and makes sure that the Romans are informed about the leadership of this emissary coming to them.

I could not be prouder and more determined to use this model and help Clergy Women of Color (CWOC) as they serve and even prepare those who are to follow in ministry in the coming generations. In Confucius' *Analects*, he writes, "Learning without due reflection leads to perplexity, reflection without learning leads to perilous circumstances."[2] Reflecting on this quote brought memories to the cohort group as we all looked back on what we learned about cultural norms that leaders must surround themselves with. There were a lot of reflections coined by the CWOC. The understanding of linguistics communication and the themes of cultural competence and cultural intelligence were great learning theories in intercultural encounter ministries. If culture, being a behavior or set of values of a people or groups, then cultural identity must be learned in all spheres of service. This learning requires nurturing, mentoring, and support. My position is that clergywomen of color are crucial vessels in a diverse ministry. Therefore, there is a need to help prepare current and new leaders of generations to come in serving the local church designed of a cross cultural/cross-racial ministry.

---

[2] Rogers, *The Analects of Confucius,* 60.

Research Design:

The model for this research design was implemented using several methodologies. The focus emphasis was on the hypothesis. Clergywomen of color need preparation before being assigned into cross cultural appointments where they face pushback from parishioners. The selected approach of executing this project involved clergywomen themselves. Over twenty-three CWOC in the Michigan Conference (MC) were invited via emails (see Appendix A) being sent to them. Those who responded participated. We mailed/emailed the Informed Consent Forms (see Appendix C) to them. Among those CWOC who responded, ten of them signed the consent forms; however, during the first week of the workshop, two decided not to show up. We followed them up with phone calls, text messages, and an email to see if they were still interested, but they did not respond. The requirement was that they must be present for six consecutive weeks. Due to their absence, they were disqualified from participating.

I began the training with only eight participants who successfully completed the requirements of the cohort study. The participants' ages ranged from thirty-seven years old to seventy-eight years old. Many of them had been in ministry for many years serving in the range of six to thirty years, and all had served in cross-cultural appointments. Their cross-sectional time of service ranged from three to seven different churches of cross-cultural/cross-racial appointments. All participants shared their strengths and challenges in their CC/CR appointments.

Project Methodology:

The project required enough data to prove the hypothesis. Therefore, the study used selected data collection methods, including pre-and post-questionnaires (see Appendix D), individual interviews (see Appendix F), group discussions (see Appendix E), and focused journaling (see Appendix G).

Pre-Questionnaires

Pre-questionnaires helped to establish a baseline data of their attitudes, beliefs, and general understanding regarding cross-cultural/cross-racial ministry, roles, mentors, and new ideas regarding their ministry model, and post-questionnaires helped confirm changes in thoughts, ideas, and attitudes as they were developed, preprepared, and equipped with more robust cross-cultural ministry tools and resources. This method was used to work one-on-one pressing challenging questions to get valid data (see Appendix D).

Group Discussions

This method created dialogue and holy conversations about issues of questions affecting the church as the body of Christ. This allowed listening closely, having an open mind to hear what others are saying, and being aware of diverse cultural perspectives throughout their experiences. The method provided an assurance to participants to be sensitive of what they say and respect what others had to say. Overall, a covenant was made that whatever they heard would remain confidential (see Appendix E).

Individual Interviews

This method helped to assess the hypothesis in that the method gave a private individualized touch and confidence along with freedom for participants to be candid and express their thoughts and feelings. The individual interviews allowed me as the investigator to learn behavior and attitudes not expressed in group focused discussion and revealed any perceptions that would qualify or disqualify the data provided in group setting (see Appendix F).

Focused Journaling Questions

This was the fourth method of data collection. Participants, during each session, were assigned a journal question to take home to reflect on it and write their thoughts weekly. This method provided concise data allowing participants to realize how their present attitudes toward ministry and the people ministered affect the church leadership. The cultural anthropology teachings, practices, and communication theory help keep the church together as a Body of Christ (see Appendix G).

Implementation of the Research Project

In this section of project analysis, the reader will be introduced to the entire process of research and the workshops conducted. This section provides an overview of each week of the workshop and what instruments were used to gather data for the hypothesis. Clergywomen of color in MC were the sole participants. We culminated with data collected from each participant according to guidelines of the approved Institutional

Review Board (IRB) and the recommendations from the formatting board of United Theological Seminary.

Initial Steps

As the researcher, prior to implementation, I had taken certain steps in preparation for the workshop. The project was implemented on September 13, 2024. The recruitment process began in March 2024 by collecting names and participant contacts. I had initially more than fifteen minutes explaining what the cohort study was about. This short conversation provided clarity on the dos and don'ts of the cohort study. Formal invitations, letters, flyers (see Appendix B), and consent forms were sent to participants six weeks before the study began. Conversely, it also cleared away any doubt in taking part. I wanted to assure participants that the study would help many leaders in cross-cultural and non-cross-cultural ministries. Therefore, they would benefit by serving as agents of change through sharing their experiences about cross-cultural appointments.

The Contextual Associates and Professional Associates were very instrumental in this project. Contextual Associates met in the first stage and provided feedback on a resounding model. They read the chapters written and provided ideas and structure of the art model of the cohort study. They helped in recruiting participants. One of them took part in the entire six-week study. They read over materials and made suggestions to the scripts and even slides that were being used. One attended one of the workshops and helped in running the slides while I presented the material for the week.

The Peer Associate was very instrumental in reading the document, providing suggestions, and correcting grammar in some sentences. The Peer Associate also

provided prayers and support when I felt overwhelmed. He further helped download some articles that would support the research findings. We both (researcher and peer associate) in this case were accountable to each other in assignments completion and submission.

Two of my Professional Associates were very instrumental and beneficent. They succor in crafting the research questions; they checked on me often; and they became my spiritual guardian angels. They reminded me of self-care, and most of all, the power of prayer. One of the Professional Associates invited me to a cross-cultural workshop which added knowledge as I designed the project. The documents were read and one of them turned my paper "red" which meant she was thorough in proofreading and wanted to see a sound paper being presented. One suggested an in-person session, but it was not going to be possible, as my contextual area was widely spread out in the state of Michigan. Their enthusiasm and willingness for this research project helped garner support and moreover created a bond of relationships.

Weekly Cohort Study Overview

Week 1: September 13, 2024

The first week had a lesser agenda compared to the five to follow. The session began with eight participants. I provided a welcome address. Prayer was provided by one of the participants. Then I invited the team to introduce themselves. Participants provided their names, where they serve, and how long they have been in ministry. The next item was to conduct a pre-questionnaire survey which they were given twenty minutes to

complete. The survey was given in a google docs form where they completed it and sent their questionnaire survey answers back to me online in a secure feature. Immediately after completing the survey, I took ten minutes and provided an overview of the project. This included sharing the problem statement and hypothesis. An explanation of participant's rights, responsibilities, and the investigator's role in the study was given.

The session was concluded with a question, answer, and clarification of the reason for the study. In conclusion, a first weekly focused journal reflection question was provided to be centered on weekly learnings. The session ended with anticipation as the cohort team excitedly were looking forward to the next session to come the following week.

Week 2: September 20, 2024

The session began with anticipation. The participants seemed eager to learn during this session. I welcomed everyone and one of the cohort members opened with a prayer. We reviewed the agenda for the day and began focusing on the theme "The Mentor Paves the Way," as the encounter journey. I provided the clergywomen's statistical data and why women of color are rising in ministerial positions.

We looked at the Biblical Foundations' text Romans 16:1-20 as the why of this study. The leading question was, "What was the purpose of Phoebe's choice to take the manuscript to the Romans and how can clergywomen of color relate that role to their ministries?" The group was very attentive as I taught the journey about Pheobe. Paul had portrait Phoebe to be "pure," "radiant," or "bright," a servant leader and deacon to

execute the mission. Some scholars believed Phoebe was responsible for delivering Paul's epistle to the Roman Christian church as she had spent much time with Paul.

We moved to group discussion and the participation enlightened me that the cohort group was attentive through observation and the questions asked and answered that followed the training. This discussion also created open discussion experiences from the group. Many were able to see Phoebe's role applying to them as sent to communities they had no knowledge about. At the end, the cohort group was provided with a weekly reflective journal question and ended the session with goodbyes to one another.

Week 3: September 27, 2024

This session was very story telling as we dived into the Historical Foundations' theme of the study. As usual, I began with a welcome greetings followed by a prayer from one of the participants. I reviewed the agenda for the session and captioned some for the learnings from earlier sessions. I reminded the team how important history is because it is an art or recalling the past. This was good to show how Christianity began and the role of women during the early Christianity.

During this session, we reviewed the themes of "preparedness, resistance, and cultural competence." We discussed the role of John Wesley as an icon who coined Methodism and his belief about women leading the church. The ordination of Helenor M. Davisson as the first ordained deacon by the North Indiana Conference of the Methodist Protestant Church in 1866 made history in the Methodist tradition.[3] This subject was an

---

[3] Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. and Susan E. Warrick, *Historical Dictionary of Methodism* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2013), xxv, ProQuest eBook Central, http://ebookcentral.Pro quest.com/lib/dtl/detail. action?doc ID=1562859. dtl on 2023-01-15 22:10:12. v.

eye opening seeing the responses of the group how women have come this far to serve God. We were to break out in triads, but the group chose to stay together as the discussion was cajoled listening together to historical stories.

The emphasis on John Wesley as the Wesleyan way of life and teachings offered hope to the group as they understood ways for reforming the church while spreading scriptural holiness worldwide. The group understood the works of many CWOC was still to be created. I summarized lesson learnings and addressed any questions asked. The participants were provided with a weekly journal reflective question and the session ended on a high note of well wishes to one another.

Week 4: October 4, 2024

Session four, before it began, reminded us of the journey progress ahead of us. I was prayerful and reminded the team constantly via text and over an email two hours before the session began to be present. This was a check in for me that the team was still holding together.

We began with welcome, and a volunteer person prayed. I reviewed the agenda for the session and summarized materials covering the previous lesson. The learning for the day were based on Theological Foundations and intercultural encounter of clergywomen of color in CC/CR ministry. We discussed the role of women in leadership and how theology shapes humanity's way of living and how it defines the relationship between women and men in a community. The discussion was centered on the historical Jesus and how Jesus perceived leadership qualities from women. The theme of leadership on the Cultural Intelligence Model (CIM) was broadly discussed. The participants looked

at each other through the lens of Self-Assessment Tool (SAT), being self-aware, taking self-care, and being self-determined while serving in the role of CWOC in CC/CR ministry. Observing the group, I could see relief on most faces and gauged detailed discussion from all participants.

The dire discussion culminated on womanist theology as articulated by women of color, who coined the term by women searching for liberation in ministry. We ended by discussing whether CWOC were still searching for liberation. There was much to cover, and we ended with question/answers. This was the longest session compared to the earlier three. I gave instructions for the next coming session and provided the weekly reflective journal question, and the session was adjourned.

Week 5: October 11, 2024

Week five of the training finally arrived and the bonding of sisterhood was appearing to be strong. We opened with welcome remarks and a prayer from a volunteer. I reviewed the agenda and summarized the earlier learnings from last week. The focus for week five was centered on the Interdisciplinary Foundations of the study. Communication theory was the center of our discussion. The leading question was, “Why is CWOC communication causing pushback in ministry and how can we rectify this misconstrued misunderstanding?” We discussed spiritual integrity of the church and conflict resolution as themes that can create love and diversity in working together as all God’s children.

This session was very emotional as many in the group could relate to the harm they had experienced. It was a lengthy discussion, and I decided to introduce to the group

successive traits of leading a cross-cultural ministry that has diverse cultural beliefs and values. The group went into question answer session and I gave summary and prompts for focused journal reflection to do at home. The session ended well.

Week 6: October 18, 2024

This session began with a welcome address and prayer. Participants checked in with excitement. It seemed like a relief to many of them as they realized it was the last day of our cohort group's learning together. I reviewed what we had done in the past six weeks. It was a good summary to see how much was covered in all five sessions. Next, the participants were invited to take post-questionnaire survey administered through Google docs forms since we were on the online Zoom setting. Participants were not able to keep as the form was sent directly to me in an email that was secured.

After the post-questionnaire survey, participants were informed to send their focused journal reflections via email to me. They were instructed this was confidential so again a secure email was provided to them to send their journal work. The next item on the agenda was for me to do a debriefing. I explained to them what would happen next in the Final Project. I informed the group I will be able to share any findings after the project is over in about three months. This was a bittersweet experience as I received praise and several thank you accolades from several of them. The cohort group realized our time together was ending and expressed the sisterhood of trust, love, support, and knowledge they had acquired.

Summary of Learnings

This section discusses the different data presented during the Intercultural Encounter period. The toolbox used was derived from the four Foundations' chapters that I wrote for this doctoral thesis and what we had covered. The four data points were pre- and post-questionnaire surveys, group discussions, individual interviews, and focused journal questionnaires. After the implementation process was completed, I gathered data and did the analysis listed throughout this chapter. What follows is a concise summary analysis.

Anticipated Impact on Participants

Considering the research design and participants involved, they were all educated clergywomen; some attended seminary and are ordained clergy leader's while others took a Course of Study route to become certified local pastors. Despite the difference in educational levels, their contributions did not show any disparity of class, education, or cultural variations. First, my hope was to cover several research materials that would elicit discussion and provide more data for the research.

Second, I wanted them to learn that they are not alone based on the experiences they might have undergone in their specific areas of ministry. And lastly, I wanted the participants to see and achieve the goal of understanding the themes for preparation, nurturing, and empowerment in cross-cultural ministries. By giving them nuggets on successful traits of communication and expressing personal experience, this would help alleviate the hurt and the isolation they encounter in their ministry when pushback from the parishioners is identified. Through journaling, I gauged for participants their desire on

spiritual discipline as a means of reflection, Self-Assessment Tool (SAT), which encompassed self-care, self-awareness, and self-determination — all of which were meaningful practices letting them lead a healthy ministry.

First Collection of Data

In pre- and post-questionnaire surveys, eight questions were presented to eight participants. The data indicated eight of the participants had some knowledge about the topic of cross-cultural appointments. Participants' responses were either related or somehow not related to the five areas covered regarding cross-cultural ministry in the six weeks of training sessions.

Cross-Cultural Competence

Did the participant's response understand cultural competence in their CC/CR ministry?

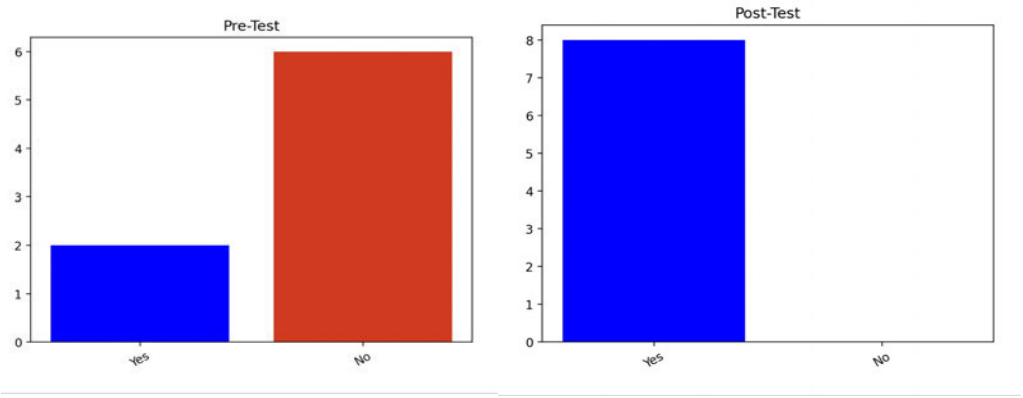


Figure 1. Comparison of participants who exhibited knowledge relating to the term Cross Cultural Competence prior to training and after training session.

In the pre- and post-questionnaires, 60% of the participants indicated that they did not understand the term cultural competence. In the post-questionnaire survey results, there was a shift and 100 % demonstrated they understood the term cultural competence

and they could apply it to their ministry. This suggests that the training had an impact, and participants understood cultural competence as a phrase they need to be knowledgeable of as they minister in cross-cultural appointments.

Preparation for first Cultural Ministry

Did the participant's response indicate they were prepared for cross-cultural ministry?

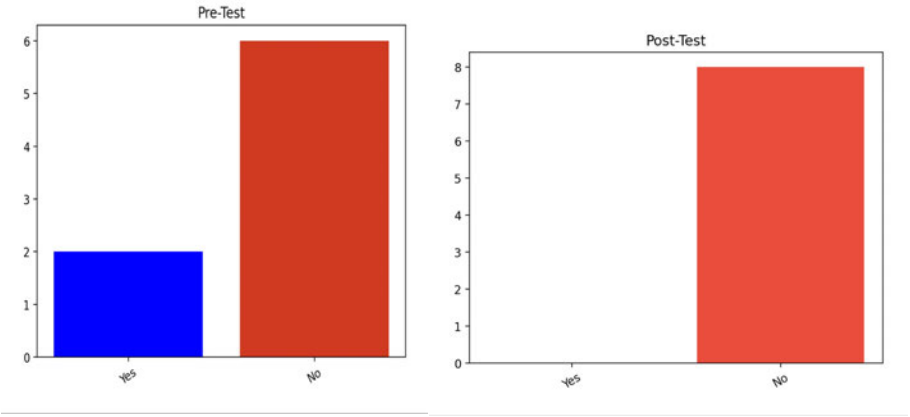


Figure 2. Comparison of participants who felt they were prepared or not prepared for first cross-cultural ministry appointments before and after training.

Prior to instruction, 80% indicated that they were not trained for cross-cultural ministry while 20% felt they were prepared. After instruction, the positive responses increased to 100% indicating that they were not prepared for the ministry in a cross-cultural setting. There was a shift in lack of preparation between the two who felt they were prepared. After training, their answers were reversed. This indicates that there was a punctilious understanding of what preparation to ministry requires.

Spiritual leaders of a different race/culture from their own

Did the participant's response relate to knowing another spiritual leader of a different race or culture?

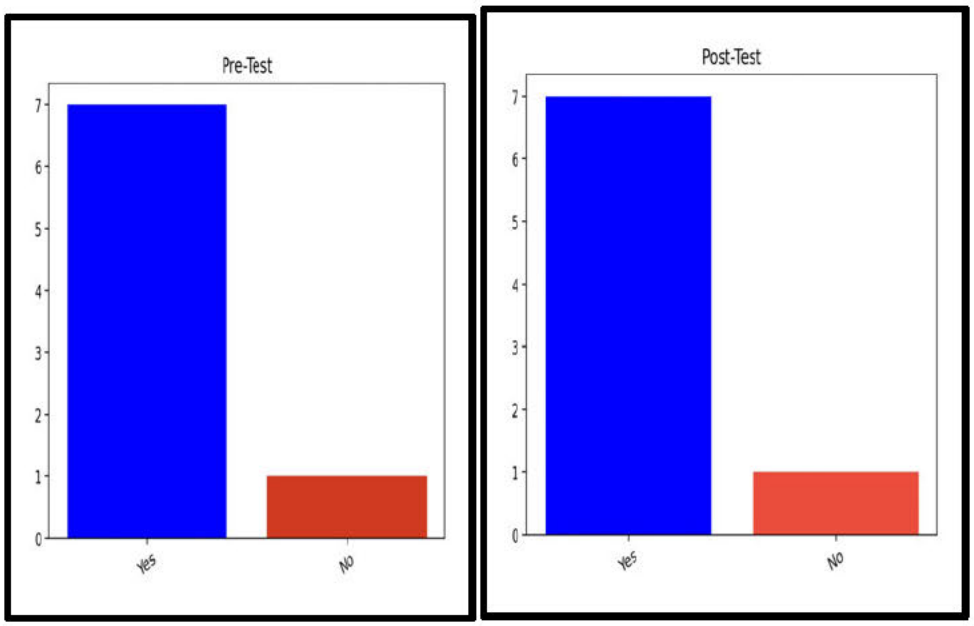


Figure 3. Results of participants whose responses indicated they know another spiritual leader of a different race or culture to relate to.

The responses remained the same in both pre- and post-questionnaire surveys. All 90% of participants indicated they knew another leader of a different culture apart from the 10% who did not know another leader of a different culture. The instructions strongly supported having a mentor of a different race might be valuable.

How do you define "Resistance"

Did the participant's response relate to the issue of resistance and pushback by parishioners?

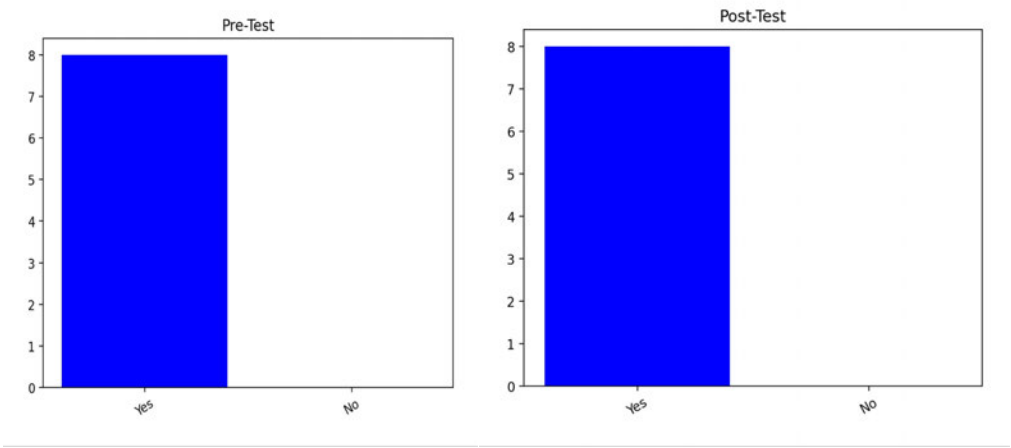


Figure 4. Pre- post-questionnaire surveys' comparison of participants' responses which elicited experiences from cultural appointments.

Analysis

Question number 7 of the pre- and post-survey questionnaire was designed to determine and collect data if CWOC received pushback and resistance in their leadership roles. The question provided data on the challenges faced in ministry and why resistance was common in cross-cultural appointments. A lot of issues were factored in this question. Overwhelmingly, 100% of the participants alluded to having pushbacks and resistance in their cross-cultural ministry. The 100% positive response rate had a foundational understanding of experiences encountered in their cross-cultural encounter ministries. All participants were headful and understood the modules that were presented. The results had a strong affirmation that the presentation was impactful and effective in understanding where there is pushback for CWOC in CC/CR ministry. All participants articulated assorted reasons for resistance both from the negative and the positive aspects.

Second Method of Data Collection

Group discussion was the second method of data collection for the project. The participants knew each other as we met on Zoom. We tried Webex and many of them had difficulty using Webex.

The chart below reveals how the group progressed during the entire cohort study of discussion.

Metric	Measurement	Target	Actual
Audience attendance	# of attendees	12	8
Engagement duration	Minutes	60	70
Q&A interaction	# of questions	5	8
Positive feedback	Percentage (%)	90	95

Figure A. This tool was used to measure how the audience participated and interacted. The participants exhibited attentiveness. They were very engaged and respected each other's responses as provided without criticism or negative feedback.

Participants	Responses
CWOCZA	"I have no mentor, but it would be nice to have one."
CWOCHB	"During my time, I never thought I needed a mentor, I grew up in a community where everybody looked up for each other."
CWOCQA	"I did not have a mentor in my first time appointment, but I learned that it is good to have a mentor to help you through the process."

CWOCKA	"Mentors are important, I grow up in a diverse community, I went to school with Spanish speaking group of students, and I learned then that sharing our beliefs was richly needed."
CWOCNB	"To me mentoring was not an option. When I was appointed to a place that had distinct cultural beliefs, I needed a mentor who would be my support system. I felt encouraged as I went through the change both for me and the people I was to serve."
CWOCCA	"I had so many mentors because I served on different conference boards. I realized in ministry one must have a mentor and by me being with people from diverse groups, I knew a mentor was rampant. I have had mentors not that all were aware of my plight in cross-cultural ministry, but I could reach out for help."
CWOCNA	"No, I have no mentor but just friends."
CWOCUB	"Mentors are so much needed in our ministry. It does not have to be a fellow clergy, but it can be someone you trust and confide in. My situation I should say I had many people around me that I could run to and ask for help. However, they did not understand my plight as they had never served in cross cultural ministry. Therefore, I had to make it through most of the times by myself."

Focus Group Discussions - Week #2

Question# 1 (see Appendix E)

Analysis

Based on the responses provided above, 80% of the participants had a mentor of some kind. However, 20% did not seek a mentor. They all agreed that a mentor in the same area of ministry is needed. The second portion of how they utilized the mentor was not fully discussed. Many of the participants chose not to answer that portion of the question. When pressed how they utilize their mentors, 70% of participants indicated that they only go to a mentor when they face challenges. And 10 % said they meet with

mentor monthly for "check in." The remaining 20 % felt they remained silent without speaking of their challenges in cross-cultural ministry. This affirms the need for preparation to ministry. Clergywomen of color suffer silently when they feel vulnerable. The results displayed affirm the modules taught on understanding cultural intelligence and the SAT model. Self-care, self-awareness, and self-determination were impactful.

Focus Discussion Questions - Week 3

Question # 2 (see Appendix E)

Participant	**Responses**	**Explain why**
CWOCZA	Absolutely.	Mentors provide support and empowerment in the ministry. Offer safe spaces during challenges of sexism and racism. Mentors help build a coalition of trust and cultivate resilience. They encourage and listen when feeling low and withdrawn. "They help stop the silence CWOC undergo." Pheobe had the best mentor Paul who prepared her for the journey.
CWOCHB	Yes.	"But is hard to trust them due to lack of confidentiality."
CWOCQA	"CWOC should have a mentor."	"It helps me see multiple perspectives." "A mentor gives me someone to bounce things off."
CWOCKA	Yes. "Absolutely."	"Many CWOC might not have experience in leadership of diverse groups." "CWOC experiences a lot of animosity from members and creates isolation."
CWOCNB	Yes. CWOC should have a mentor."	"Mentors help grow spiritually." "Help reduce feeling of isolation." "Encourages and gives clarity and accountability."
CWOCCA	Yes, CWOC need experienced mentors in a cross-cultural setting.	They need people who understand conflict resolution. Have laity to be mentors to get the perspective of dealing with diverse groups. In addition to mentors, "CWOC need to go to therapy during this type of appointment."
CWOCNA	Yes.	CWOC can be the best mentors as they stand together in ministry.
CWOCUB	Yes.	Help build trust.

Analysis

The response was overwhelmingly 100% that mentors are needed for the CWOC. Drawing from the responses provided, participants talked about having someone to help when challenges occurred. The participants agreed that having a person to console them and confide in was crucial. The participants provided reasons why they needed a mentor. This indicates they needed spiritual, mental, and emotional support in CC/CR ministry. The responses all indicate that 90% will trust the mentor when it comes to confidentiality. And 10% felt insecure in sharing information.

Group Discussions- Week 4

Question # 3 (see Appendix E)

Participant	Challenges	Strengths	How did you cope with challenges.
CWOCZA	"They saw me as unfit to serve due to my English."	Prayer, Scripture, resilient,	Build relationships. Stop favoritism.
CWOCHB	"Fear within the congregation"	Prayer and devotion	Learn to communicate and use reinforcement of probing questions.
CWOCQA	Laity was never prepared for a CWOC pastor. Pushback and resistance to change. Many stayed home and hold offering.	Prayer, forming. Asking God for strength.	Attentive listening. "I share with my family for support." "Self-care."
CWOCKA	Resistance to change. Past clergy caused harm. I needed to heal the congregation. Lack of trust.	Prayer, devotions Ds support, friends and family prayed.	It hurts but I do not speak about it. Listen. Avoid same mistakes.
CWOCNB	Two women controlled everything, and they made a call to what is to be done at the church.	Prayer. Reading books.	Be resilient and do not show weakness. Seek time out and go on vacation!

	Threatened to leave church.		Speak with my supervisor.
CWOCCA	"They called me names A-city girl." The congregation was not prepared for CWOC.	Prayer and trust God.	Forgiveness. And listen to their needs.
CWOCNA	Fear of the unknown. Never had a woman preacher. Lack of linguistic communication.	Prayer.	Networking. Courageous and resilient.
CWOCUB	Congregants were always in cliques.	God was on my side through prayer.	"I had to tune in to the radio they listen in to listen to what they listen to."

Analysis

Drawing from the above responses, CWOC face many challenges in their CC/CR ministries. Not only was the setback challenging but many of them went through and survived, either with a change in appointment or with retirement. The groups revealed listening as a key element when they were faced with challenges. Of the answers provided, there was a 90% response on listening. This affirms that the instruction on communication theory and self-care portion of learning proved effective.

Group Discussions - Week 5

Question # 4 (see Appendix E)

Participant	Pastoral Responsibilities
CWOCZA	Pastor people spiritually. Be compassionate, be courageous. Have grace and mercy. Keep learning.
CWOCHB	Lead the folks. Feed the lamb. Teach the Bible. Communicate. Get people to support you.
CWOCQA	Preach and pray, love your enemies, do not discriminate. Be the best teacher. Train the congregational leaders.

CWOCKA	Use scripture as the authority for leadership, show love to them. Preach. Communicate. Learn and read widely.
CWOCNB	Listen to people and vice visa. Love them regardless of how they see you. Have a support system.
CWOCCA	Learn their culture with the hope they will learn yours. Work with laity, listen passively. And pray, support system. Study and read books for current information.
CWOCNA	Pastoral care, accept our mistakes. Be patient, give grace. Communicate.
CWOCUB	Communicate effectively, Listen, know that we are human. Take self-care. Ask for support.

Analysis

This question was to assess the understanding of biblical learning and the role of a pastor in any ministry setting. Based on the responses, the CWOC acknowledge they must lead with grace. 100% of them agreed that communication theory is vital. The other spiritual responsibilities were listening and strong bible teaching lessons. Of the eight participants, 80% recorded that they cannot lead without prayers and a sound support system. This understanding affirms the teachings that pastors of color need staunch support in their ministries. The other reoccurring leadership thread was continuing education and reading new books. About 70% mentioned that knowledge is power. This also affirms that the information and instruction received would enhance their spiritual understanding in their CC/CR ministry. Lastly, 100% of the cohort clearly understand their roles as spiritual leaders of the church.

Third Method of Data Collection-Individual Interviews

Question 1 (see Appendix F)

Did the participants response relate to taking a cross-cultural course in seminary or in course of study training?

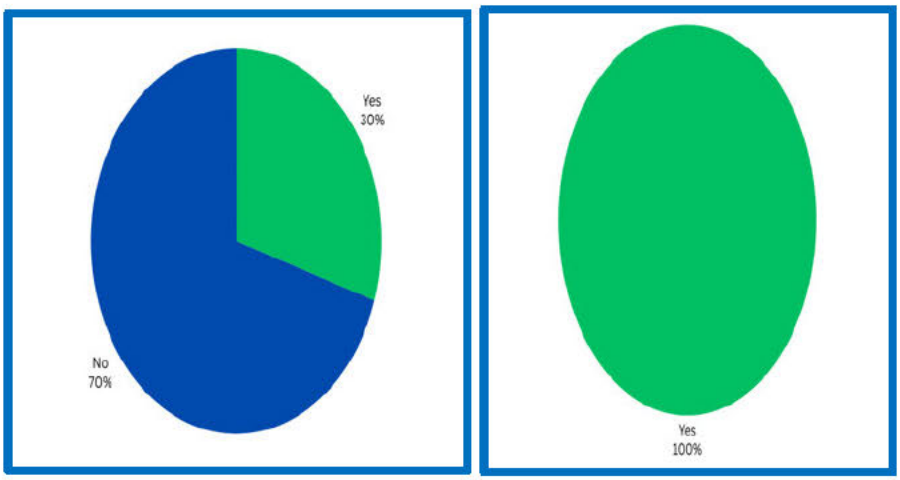


Figure A shows the comparison of participants who took a cross-cultural course in seminary prior to taking the training.

The question was to generate responses if the participants took a course in seminary on CC ministry. Of the total participants, 70% did not take a course in seminary, and 30% did take a course. When the question was redirected if they feel cross-cultural course is vital in seminary, 100% agreed the course being offered in seminary as vital. Seminary is the starting point of preparing students. If all clergy were prepared for cross-cultural ministry, it would make a difference for many CWOC in ministry. The training affirmed the necessity of preparation.

Question 2 (see Appendix F)

Participant	**Customs**	**Benefits of Cross-cultural ministry**
CWOCZA	Keep our traditions.	Family oriented.

CWOCHB	Family.	Learn other cultures and diversify congregation.
CWOCQA	Our practices e.g., Egg supper, movie with popcorn.	Bring community together.
CWOCKA	We have always done it this way.	Cultural diversity and church growth.
CWOCNB	Family oriented, yet not open.	Keep families together.
CWOCCA	Refusal of women clergy.	Women bring integrity and rule with love.
CWOCNA	Not embracing children ministries Too quick to condemn the youth.	Children attract more people, grandparents, and parents.
CWOCUB	Refuses to network with other people in the communities. Doing same things expecting different results.	Learn and embrace innovative ideas.

Analysis

Drawing from the answers provided in question # 2, participants are in an agreement that accepting new ways of doing things is becoming one body of Christ. All of them agreed that congregants must be open to adapting innovative ideas to enhance church growth.

Question # 3 (see Appendix F)

Participant	**What frightens you?**	**What brings confidence in ministry?**
CWOCZA	Demands of the job. Lofty expectations from members. Triangulation.	Knowing I am a child of God.
CWOCHB	Lack of respect from leaders of the church. Lack of laity training and preparation for a new clergy. When they see me a super woman.	Self-identity and self-awareness.
CWOCQA	Name calling and disrespect. Sexism. Racism and misogyny in church of God.	Building relationships and support from family.
CWOCKA	Hate from some members. An idea that they pay me, so I must do what they want. Gender	Teaching them the church protocols. Understanding my calling.

	bias.	
CWOCNB	Lack of support from leaders. Racism and cultural disparities. Lack of preparation for leaders.	Listening to them and not losing hope. Being courageous and compassionate.
CWOCCA	Fear of failure. Defaming remarks.	Building relationships and teaching the Bible.
CWOCNA	"People do not accept who I am."	Jeremiah 29:11
CWOCUB	The work of God not being done.	God is always in control.

Analysis

This question generated a lot of lack of support, loneliness, and the dilemma that CWOC faces. The issue that pops up was "not being seen" as leaders of the twenty-first century. All participants agreed that there is a huge disconnect between local pastors and the people they serve. The discussion ended with an agreement that CWOC are delayed in ministry as they spend more time navigating and building relationships before they embark on ministries of Kingdom building. The after-effects are that the community is underserved. These generated responses affirming that the training was effective on understanding the cultural disparities.

Question # 4 (see Appendix F)

Participant	Areas of needed development in Ministry.
CWOCZA	Administration
CWOCHB	Financial planning
CWOCQA	How to deal with people of a different race
CWOCKA	Finance of the church
CWOCNB	Communication Theory
CWOCCA	Communication, Cultural anthropology

CWOCNA	Communication
CWOCUB	How to communicate with people of different culture

Analysis

Responses to this question # 4 was to generate data of deficient areas in ministry for CWOC. Communication topped the area for growth with many participants. 70% of them felt there was a need for communication improvement while the other 30% were for administration or finance. From this learning point, it was affirmed that the training was effective as we trained on communication theory and success traits in cross-cultural ministry.

Question # 5 (see Appendix F)

Partic ipant	A ware of brokenness	What is brokenness in ministry?	Causes of brokenness	Do you suffer from brokenness
CWO CUB	Yes	Loneliness and stressful situations.	Misunderstanding and lack of trust.	Not anymore.
CWO CCA	Yes	Hurt, stress, wounded souls.	Feud and favoritism.	Sometimes
CWO CNA	Yes	Suffering in ministry.	Anger, insecure folks, hostility.	Sometimes
CWO CNB	Yes	Loneliness, anxiety.	Poor communication Mistrust.	Yes
CWO CKA	Yes	Loneliness, wounds never healed.	Racism and sexism.	Yes
CWO CQA	Yes	Isolation, alienation.	Fear and not communicating well	Most times
	Yes	Isolation, anxiety.	Unverified rumors	Sometimes

CWOCZA			Mistrust.	
CWOCHB	Yes	Lack of nearby friends, isolation.	When leaders fail to find the source and cause of the problem.	All the time

Analysis

Question # 5 was to solicit responses if brokenness was a factor in cross-cultural ministry. There was a consensus of 100% of brokenness in CC/CR ministry. Of the 100% participation, 90 % alluded to having suffered from brokenness apart from one who felt she did not think about brokenness instead chose to remain silent. This was a sensitive discussion point which affirmed the training on self-care was effective and preparation for ministry is vital.

Question #6 (see Appendix F)

Participant	Pastoral Change	Transitional Leadership	Local Church Suffered?	Why Resistance
CWOCNB	Poor	No	Yes	Racism and triangles.
CWOCCA	Poor	No	Yes	Color of my skin. Lack of knowledge and education.
CWOCNA	Fair	No	Yes	Woman of color, Triangulation.
CWOCUB	Fair	No	Yes	Insecure and lack of self-management.
CWOCZA	Good	Yes	Not sure	Dislike women leaders
CWOCQA	Fair	No	Yes	My color, fear.
CWOCHB	Poor	No	Yes	I do not know.
CWOCKA	Poor	No	Yes	They have never had a woman of color as a pastor.

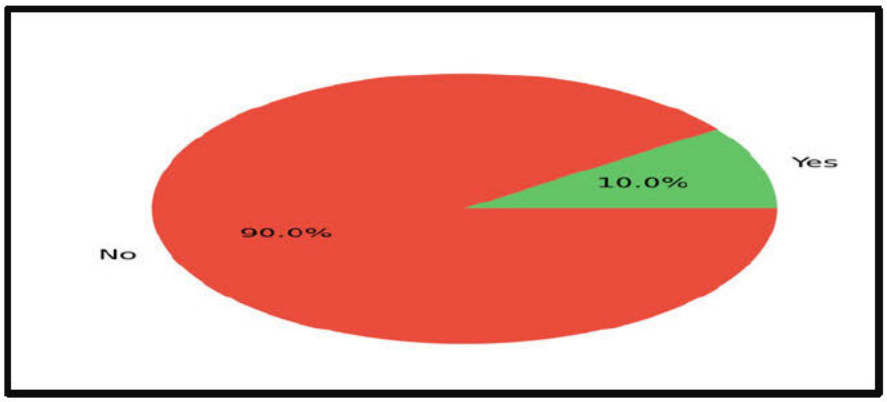
Analysis

Question # 6 was to generate discussion as to why resistance and pushbacks were prevalent in CC/CR ministry. Of the responses provided, 90% felt it was due to poor or lack of effective pastoral transition. Either the previous pastor left many congregants wounded, or the congregants did not want the new pastor. Participants agreed that lack of preparation on both sides, the congregation and the new pastor, created resistance and hurt on both the church members and the new clergy who is to heal the wounded souls. The training on cultural anthropology proved effective in this case. More awareness of unfamiliar cultural aspects can help improve incompetence. 100% of participants agreed the church suffers when there is triangulation. The training on cultural competence and cultural intelligence affirms preparation for leadership is key to congruent ministry.

Fourth Method of Data Collection - Focused Journaling

Session 1 Question # 1 (see Appendix G)

This question was to generate responses if the CWOC had any tools/resources for ministry.

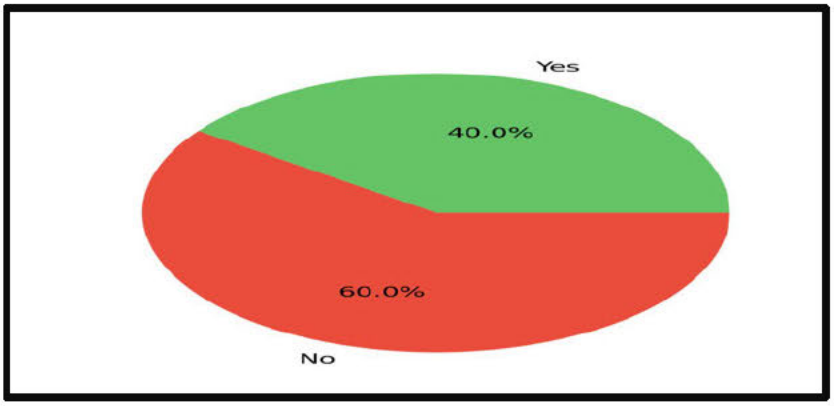


Analysis

Romans 16 affirms preparation, and support is vital for ministry. 90% of participants did not have any tools or were never provided with resources, while 10% acknowledged they had resources. The training on mentorship and nurturing proved effective.

Session 2, Question # 2 (see appendix G)

This question was asked to generate responses of those who seek help during conflict.



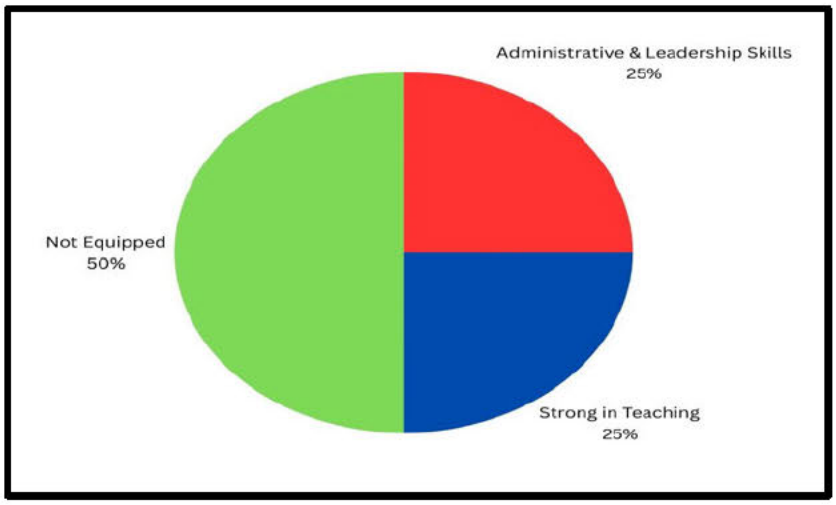
Analysis

This question indicated a lack of full participation. Either they held the answers, or they chose to remain silent. At least 60% of the participants indicated they avoided conflict. About 40% of the participants seek help during conflict. The training on conflict resolution and spiritual integrity provided information on how to build trust. That affirms that preparation and support provided to CWOC would enhance open communication as opposed to keeping silent.

Session 3, Question # 3 (see Appendix G)

Responses to this question were to generate skills participants bring to cross-cultural ministry.

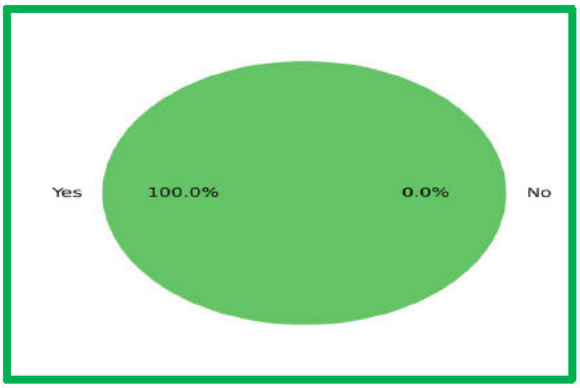
- 30% responded they had administrative and leadership skills.
- 30 % responded were strong in teaching.
- 40 % responded they were not equipped in these areas.



The training affirmed that there was effective leadership and support of Paul to Pheobe in her ministry. The intersectionality of John Wesley's model on empowerment of training leaders, clergy, and laity affirmed the dire need of the congruent leader's preparation, especially in a foreign environment.

Session 4, Question # 4 (see Appendix G)

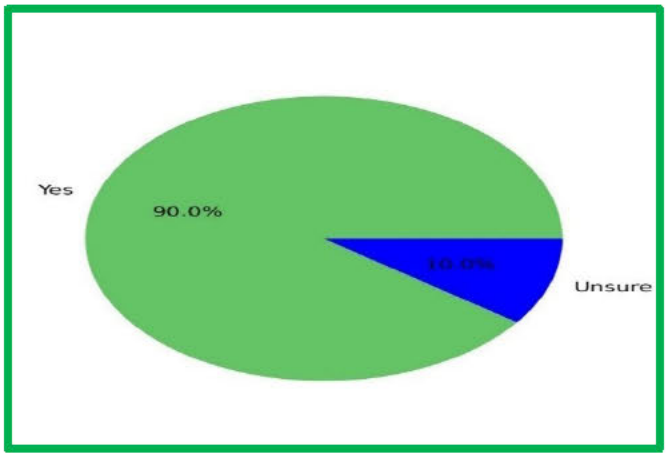
This question was to generate responses whether mentoring was an effective tool in ministry.



With consensus, 100% of participants agreed that mentorship is needed in cross-cultural ministry. The training based on the text of Romans 16 of the Biblical Foundations affirmed the need for preparation and support in ministry.

Session 5, Question #5 (see Appendix G)

This question was to generate responses of accountability with each one's personal beliefs.



Many participants, 90%, agreed they take personal responsibility when things do not go well in ministry. The training on clergy spiritual integrity affirmed the teaching on self-awareness, and self-identity is vital for clergy. Also, the training on communication theory affirmed the effectiveness of those who responded with a yes response.

Conclusion

A Journey to Cross Cultural Encounter

The results of this project and study reflected the importance of preparing clergywomen of color for cross-cultural ministry from a group and practical perspective. In any church settings, women of color lead without any difference of color identity. They lead with love of God and love of a neighbor. The difference is never at their forefront on their ministry leadership. Thus, the study provided a forum for a group of women of faith to express their experiences in ministry. The results of firsthand experiences and cultural competence discussed and observed proved to be beneficial to the women in the group with principles and strategies to lead such churches with resistant membership. This was noticeably clear and gave clarity why pushbacks and resistance were common in cross-cultural ministry. In her book, *Leaders Who Last: Sustaining Yourself and Your Ministry*, Margaret J. Marcuson illustrates the successful traits in ministry leadership. She writes, 'The challenges faced by the church were not merely about momentary crisis of losing a long-term pastor but were rooted in the history of the church from the beginning."[4] It is true that pushback from parishioners is not something that just began now. Women faced resistance from early ministry and preparation and support as Paul illustrated with Phoebe. This is what the current church leadership should uphold.

---

[4] Margaret J. Marcuson, *Leaders Who Last: Sustaining Yourself and Your Ministry* (New York, NY: Seabury Books, 2009), 27.

The replicable research design on, Intercultural Encounter: A Training Model that Prepares Clergywomen of Color for Cross Cultural Leadership Ministry, demonstrated how relational experiences deconstructed blockades that inhibit women of color in ministerial leadership. The hypothesis was proven that when clergywomen of color are supported and prepared for cross-cultural ministry, then they will be prepared to lead in ministry without resistance or pushback from the parishioners. The cross-cultural encounter model targeted women of color in ministry. The tools provided during the training to the participants were weapons to combat resistance and allostatic overload. The project provided a curriculum that included self-care, self-awareness, self-determination, strong biblical grounding, along with communication theory coupled with building relationships and showing compassion.

It was important to learn the cultural aspects of the people they are serving. Caring for spiritual integrity and setting boundaries to personal care as emphasized enhanced professional development in their ministry. Per the post-questionnaire survey, there was 100 % attitudinal change in understanding cross-cultural competence. The women gained 100% clarity of ministry calling into cross-cultural appointments.

What Did I learn Through Implementation of the Project?

As I implemented the project, I learned leadership is not personal but a collaborative ministry. The discussions from the group revealed that culture was not just ethnicity, but it was more of reluctance, resistance, regrets, and reactivity which is simply

"putting off tires but not growing a new garden."[5] Creating a new culture by creating a culture of renewal might be what the church today requires. The group also expressed sentiments in discussion which brought the group to barriers of achieving renewal, and collectively the participants agreed elements like personalities, past history and probable cultural differences were key factors that cause resistance in cross-cultural ministries. People tend to see the past but cannot see the future. Taking risks and communicating like Jesus is what is required. Treating people with respect and communicating with each other would bring about renewal and healing. Churches need healing and having mentors would be an asset to pastors who just want to excel in ministry instead of receiving pushback from parishioners. A course in cultural anthropology would be a good place to start where beliefs, values, and traditions can be shared and learned.

The biblical revelation found in the text of Romans 16 shifted leadership notions to focus on ministry through preparation, nurturing, and empowerment. Overall, congregational intelligence is what is required in CC ministry. Leadership must shift its paradigm and lead like Jesus during the conflict times. Culture must shift from fear to faith. The shift must be how ministry gets done through collaboration and teamwork. A shift in congregational focus improves the church's plans for the community and "the kingdom then comes on earth as it is in heaven."

[5] This is an African expression meaning that culture is collaboratively understanding each other as a way of life.

How Did the Project Work?

The journey began when I was looking for a cross-cultural cohort at United Theological Seminary which I found to be of a Korean descent. I was merged to a cohort group called "Innovative Leadership: Building Leaders and Congregations for Effective Changes," which was led by the great mentors, Dr. Dexter Cannon, and Dr. Charles Jackson. They welcomed me with love, grace, and humility, which then reminded me that the Spirit had led me to the right place that I would explore what brought me to United. My experiences in a cross-cultural appointment needed more research. I wanted to hear and learn from other people's experiences, and through this project design, I achieved what I was searching for on my journey. The project worked smoothly. There was no drop in participants after kicking off session one. We had a lot of individual participation that every session we went over the allocated time.

The point data tools used were clear and provided copious information as reflected in the data analysis. Additional questions emerged, meaning one question would lead to the other. The participants felt honored to share their experiences and were grateful for being vessels of change in cross-cultural ministry.

Next Steps and Future Work

The next step for me is to become a mentor to other cross-cultural clergywomen of color in the generation to come. My point of passion will be to help and prepare them during and before they join cross-cultural appointments. Drafting a summarized training module is what I will embark on immediately. As time goes on, I look forward to producing a teaching manual that can help leaders of the United Methodist Church

minimize CWOC pastoral resistance and pushback from parishioners. The goal is to heal the church that is so fragmented and disintegrated over conflicts that only Jesus can solve. The issues of cultural differences expressed despite Paul's teachings of allowing both Jews and Gentiles to come to the table and build the Kin-dom together call for educating people to create a cultural of renewal. The most revealing aspect of the project is to continue to teach, nurture and empower both clergy and laity of the church of Christ to work together through communication theory. My passion is to prepare and share with new pastors' best practices needed to thrive in cross- cultural ministry.

What I Would do Differently

If I were to do this project again, I would investigate a broader aspect of the church. I would include the white counterparts to hear their views. Also, I would design the project differently. I only focused on online meetings. Doing a hybrid and an in-person meeting session would have been a more effective way to see the reactions of different people. In being online only, it was sometimes difficult to see the facial expressions. Moreover, I found out not everyone was technologically savvy when it came to doing the pre- and post-questionnaire surveys. We spent more time helping people to get to the survey. Also, poor Internet services for some participants were a challenge. Noticeably, some people spoke more than others as the group was mixed with introverts and extroverts. If I had to do it again, I would make sure equal time is given for discussion questions so that everyone feels heard. Lastly, the field was a comprehensive project. I would give more duration in weeks of training instead of six. I would allocate

eight weeks. The most thrilling achievement was going through the process to the end. I will cherish my cohort group that made the study possible. Thanks be to God.

APPENDIX A

EVENT LETTER

Cohort Introduction Letter
August 11, 2024

Dear Participant:

I am a United Methodist pastor and a Doctor of Ministry student at United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. You have been selected and invited to help with this study.

The study deals with openness to persons who are different from the prevailing culture and/or race of the congregation served, or they are serving. I want to assure you that your responses will be kept confidential. I do not want to jeopardize your relationships in your church. The data will be collected using abbreviated codes.

I have attached a consent form for you to read, sign, and return to me no later than September 5, 2024, via email at [redacted] or by postal mail addressed to me at:
Beatrice Alghali, [redacted]

My prayer is that churches from around the country will be helped because you and others like you have taken the time to participate. Once the research is completed in approximately four months, I will destroy the individual surveys and keep the data electronically indefinitely, at least until my dissertation is completed and approved.

The dates for the Cohort Focus group are on Fridays:
September 13, 20, and 27, 2024
October 4, 11, and 18, 2024

Time: 7:00 pm to 8:15 pm on Zoom.
A Zoom link will be sent to you two days before the event.

I appreciate your help! May God bless you tremendously for your time and contribution to this valuable study. I will share it with you by e-mail when the research project is complete and the dissertation has been written.

Sincerely,
Beatrice Alghali

Phone: [redacted]
Email: [redacted]

APPENDIX B

EVENTR FLYER

Intercultural Encounter Clergy Cohort Study

United Theological Seminary

Doctoral Candidate: Beatrice Alghali Invites you to participate

WHAT: *RESEARCH PROJECT: ENCOUNTER: PREPARING CLERGYWOMEN OF COLOR FOR CROSS-RACIAL/CULTURAL LEADERSHIP MINISTRY*

WHO: *CLERGYWOMEN OF COLOR IN CR/CC MINISTRY*

WHEN: *FALL OF 2024 FOR 6 WEEKS*

WHERE: *ZOOM CLASSES ONLINE*

WHY: *CLERGYWOMEN OF COLOR FACE RESISTANCE FROM PARISHIONERS*

If Any Further Questions,
Contact Beatrice Alghali
[redacted]
[redacted]

APPENDIX C

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Investigator Name: Beatrice Alghali
Contact Information: [redacted], email [redacted]

Introduction: I am a doctoral student at United Theological Seminary.

Purpose: I am conducting a study on "Intercultural Encounter: Developing A Training Model that Prepares Clergywomen of Color for Cross-Racial/Cultural Leadership Ministry" at the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church. The purpose is that clergywomen of color are unprepared to address their resistance in cross-cultural appointments. If these clergywomen participate in training about ministry within a cross-cultural context, then they will be equipped to address resistance from parishioners.

Requirements for Participation: You are invited because you are a clergywoman of color in the Michigan Conference of the United Methodist Church, USA, serving or served in a cross-cultural ministry, and you are above eighteen years of age.

Procedures: If you agree to be in the study, you will be asked to participate in a six weeks focus group meeting, one hour and thirty minutes each, on cross-cultural training in areas such as cross-cultural leadership and organization, Cultural Competence, and Intelligence, Nurturing and Mentoring, Resilience and Adaptability, clergy self-examination, and Spiritual Integrity of the church which includes cross-cultural communication, and Conflict Resolution on Zoom/Webex forum. In addition, you will take a pre-and post- questionnaire surveys, complete a weekly journaling questionnaire, and participate in an individual interview and weekly group discussions.

Human Subject participation: All participants must have consented to participate in the study, and they will be protected and treated with the utmost respect and fairness throughout the study. If you are married and you happen to be pregnant during the study, please notify the researcher immediately and obtain a letter from the doctor for safety reasons required by Federal Law.

Risks: The foreseeable risks and discomforts may include physical, psychological, social, or economic discomfort or inconvenience. However, the primary risks are dedicating your time, honest responses, and sharing confidential information with the primary investigator. All information will be kept anonymous, and specific names of participants will not be disclosed in any data. In the event of accidental data disclosure, there may be legal, financial, social, or personal implications. I, the researcher, will abide by the state's mandatory reporting laws.

Benefits: The primary benefits of your participation are that you will receive cross-cultural training that will prepare you for your pastoral ministry and a copy of all resources for your future use.

Voluntariness: Participation is voluntary, and you may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. You can also stop participating at any time. Your decision to participate will have no impact on your membership of the Michigan Conference or whatever else you think this study may have an impact upon. If something makes you feel uncomfortable in any way while you are studying, please contact me directly in person, on the phone, or in electronic communication. My contact information is at the top of this consent form. You can refuse to respond to any or all the questions, and you will be able to withdraw from the process at any time. However, the risk of many withdrawing might impact the group focus for not meeting the requirements numbers to do the study.

Confidentiality: We will be careful to keep your information confidential and ask you and all the focus group members to keep the discussion confidential. There is always a small risk of unwanted or accidental disclosure. The conversations and the focus groups will be recorded and transcribed only with your permission. Any notes, recordings, or transcriptions will be kept private. I will be the only one with access to your information. The files will be encrypted and password protected. You can decide whether you want your name used. Participants must be in a private room during the focus session. All participants will leave their cameras and be unmuted for the whole hour duration of the study. There will be research assistants who will be assisting you, the researcher, with certain tasks such as recording or cording Zoom or Webex recordings.

Summary: If you have any questions about the research study, please contact me at [redacted] or ([redacted]).

Signature:
Signing this paper means that you have read it, or had it read to you and that you want to be part of the study. If you do not want to be part of the study, do not sign the paper. Being part of the study is up to you, and no one will be mad if you do not sign this paper or even if you change your mind later. You agree that you have been told about this study, why it is being done, and what to do.

Signature of Person Agreeing to Participate in the Project/Study

Date Signed

APPENDIX D

PRE- AND POST-QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY

Pre- and Post-Questionnaire Survey

1. How do you define cross-cultural competence? (This definition will shape the content of our training sessions and help meet specific needs and expectations as we tailor our approach effectively).

2. How prepared were you when you were assigned to your first cross-cultural appointment? Please explain briefly. (This question will provide initial data on experiences and challenges that are invaluable to us. The data will guide us in tailoring the training to address these issues effectively).

3. Have any of your spiritual leaders been of a different race/culture from your own? If not, has such a lack of experience shaped your views as a spiritual leader? (This question is designed to collect data on historical and leadership experiences, regardless of their background).

4. Reflect on your personal life. Are any of your five closest friends of a different culture or gender? If so, what experiences influenced your closeness to them? (This question is designed to collect data on the impact of diversity in participants' personal lives and data on the influence of their approach to cross-cultural ministry).

5. If a conflict arises in a congregation, what are some necessary steps that a pastor should take to resolve the conflict, and what are some of the protocols that the pastor should take to support conflict? (This question is asked to provide data on a baseline understanding of the UMC conflict resolutions and leadership protocols).

6. What leadership skills have helped you thrive in your CC/CR ministry? Name any three to five reasons that drew you to CC/CR ministry and your hopes for this ministry (These questions will help provide data on leadership practices and elicit their reasons/data and hopes for joining the recommended ministry).

7. How do you define "resistance?" Have you ever experienced resistance from your congregants? If so, what form did it take, and how did it affect you? (These questions aim to provide data on the challenges faced in ministry and data on why resistance is common in the church).

8. What do you expect to learn from this Intercultural Encounter Cohort study group? (This question will collect data on why participants think the project study is essential).

APPENDIX E

GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONNAIRE

Group Discussion Questionnaire

1. Do you have a mentor with experience in cross-racial-cross-cultural pastoral ministry? If yes, how do you utilize their help, and if not, have you considered getting one? (This question will collect data on the role of a mentor in the CCRC ministry).

2. Mentoring is a biblical principle throughout scripture. Should or should not CWOC have mentors? Explain your response. (This question will help provide data on why CWOC leaders need ministerial support and guidance to improve their cultural competence).

3. What challenges have you experienced in your cross-racial/cultural pastoral ministry? How did you cope with the challenges? What are the strengths and weaknesses of your CCRC ministry? (These questions are designed to prompt participants to reflect on the local church ministry's vision and mission and identify areas of improvement and potential for growth. We are looking for data to improve their ministry and provide data on why they get pushback from parishioners).

4. What is your biblical/spiritual/religious understanding of your pastoral responsibilities in your first cross-cultural appointment? (This question is asked to be aware of their grounded spirituality and scriptural authority. The data provided will validate the biblical learning attained).

APPENDIX F

INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Individual Interview Questions

1. UMC Seminaries strongly recommends that individuals attend seminary and take a cross-cultural course of study. Do you feel prepared after these experiences as a pastor of a local church? Discuss your responses. (This question is asked to assess whether the CWOC believes seminary and cross-cultural encounters benefit pastors in the UMC context. The data collected will inform the ministry's readiness).

2. What are some of your congregation's customs that may not help support a cross-cultural ministry? List three to five reasons a congregation can benefit from a CC/CR ministry. (This question is asked to open minds that CC/CR ministry is not to destroy the church but to diversify it. The data will provide the likes and dislikes of the parishioners).

3. What frightens you the most about being a first-time CWOC in a local church, and what are you most confident about becoming a local church pastor? Discuss your response. (These questions are asked to assess the local church leader's preparedness. Anticipation is to acquire rich data to prove our hypothesis.)

4. Pastoring in the CC/CR ministry requires an individual to have many gifts and talents. If you could develop one area before becoming a local church pastor, which area would this be? Explain your response. (This question is asked to cause the local church leader to reflect on their spiritual gifts and deficits that impact their leadership in CC/CR ministry. The question will prompt the sharing of data on what gifts and talents clergywomen bring to ministry).

5. Are you aware of what brokenness is? If you are, how do you understand brokenness in your ministry? What do you believe are some of the causes of brokenness? Who do you think suffers from brokenness? (This question elicits critical data on the areas that hurt and need healing in ministry).

6. The problem identified in the CC/CR ministry context was that the local church membership was unwilling to trust subsequent clergywomen of color. How effective was your pastoral change in your opinion? Were these leaders providing transitional leadership during the change of pastoral administrations before you? Do you believe that the local church suffered directly from the transitional leadership during the change of pastoral administrations? Why do you think there is resistance toward CWOC? (These questions elicit data on reasons why resistance is occurring and what could be the primary cause of lack of trust among CWOC).

APPENDIX G

FOCUS JOURNALING ASSIGNMENTS

Focused Journaling Assignments

Session 1

1. Practical communication skills are used to prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts. Anyone who has experienced the pain of relationship conflict needs tools to combat the issues. What tools are available for you in your ministry to manage conflict? (This question will provide concise data on what causes conflict in the church and how to address it).

Session 2.

2. So much happens to our body and mind during conflict. How do you build trust between individuals and creatively satisfy the needs of everyone involved? Explain. (This question will challenge participants and generate data about the causes of pain and loneliness in a CC/CR ministry and how they can be de-escalated).

Session 3

3. What experiences and skills do you bring to the CC/CR pastoral ministry? What are your expectations of the new pastoral administration? When considering these expectations, indicate whether they are carryovers from the expectations of the previous pastoral administration. Do you feel you are well prepared and equipped for CC/CR ministry? Do you feel parishioners are trained enough to accept CC/CR clergy? (These questions are asked to generate data on CWOC preparedness for ministry).

Session 4

4. Mentoring has proven effective in ministry, as scripture shows that Paul recommends Pheobe to ministry in Romans 16. Should or should not clergywomen of color have mentors? Explain your response. (This question is asked to access the understanding of the biblical foundation text, and the data will validate the scriptural understanding).

Session 5.

5. Self-accountability means making conscious choices and then taking responsibility for the results. As a clergy leader of color, your personal beliefs can be easily mistaken when your options are narrow. How can you take responsibility for the choices you make and correct the mistakes? (This question helps us collect data on the issue of self-awareness and self-accountability in ministry).

APPENDIX H

SUGGESTED RECOMMENDATIONS FROM PARTICIPANTS

Suggested Recommendations From Participants

Clergywomen of color should have mentors in CC/CR ministries that understand the nature of the congregations, be prepared, and remain thoughtful and guide during challenges.

The Conference (MAC) in conjunction with GBHEM must offer a seminary course on Anthropology to help people understand why people behave differently.

All members serving on the Board of Ordained Ministry must go through training on cross-cultural appointments. Make CC training mandatory to all clergy, all Admin. Council and SPRC members.

Mandatory training on diversity for church leaders receiving cross-cultural appointments clergy. They must be trained six months before cross-cultural clergy arrives and vice-visa to clergy. Do not rush cross-cultural appointments. Conferencing reinforces steps to transitions, especially if the outgoing pastor is of a different ethnicity.

Pulpit exchange should be encouraged. Clergywomen of color preaching in white congregations and white clergy preaching in other cross-cultural churches of different ethnicities.

Encourage interfaith meetings with other women of color of different denominations to share ideas. Reduce stress issues of congregational life.

District Superintendents undergo cross-cultural training and visit CC appointments often to offer support and learn congregational concerns for their CWOC who are alienated.

Clergywomen of color must get therapy if in cross cultural appointments. Bonus of vacation time and continuing education sessions must be encouraged as they face delayed effect in ministry.

Provide the history of the church, likes, and dislikes to clergy a head of time. Respect each other's beliefs and values. Build trust. Respond with clarity, calm, and creativity.

Top Leadership of (MAC) be supportive and not be biased when conflict arises and come and conduct Cultural Intelligence classes to churches other than the cross-cultural clergy educating the congregation that is already biased or resistant.

Cross-cultural clergy share their experiences and learn the needs of the cross-cultural churches. CWOC, be you and do not assume anything. Be aware, self-help, and speak up.

Provide more communication theory training to all congregations and listen to their needs. Provide resources/tools for cross-cultural appointments.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ackermann, Denise. "Rosemary Radford Ruether: Themes from a Feminist Liberation Story." *Scriptura: International Journal of Bible, Religion and Theology in Southern Africa* 97, no. 1 (2008): 37–46.

American Anthropology Association. "What is Anthropology?" https://americananthro. org.learn-teach/what-is-anthropology/.

Ames, Rogers T. *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophy Translation.* Translated by Henry Rosemont, Jr. 998. New York, NY: Ballantine Books, the Random House Publishing Group, 1999.

Ammerman, Nancy T., Jackson W. Carroll, Carl S. Dudley, and William McKinney. eds. *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998.

Ashworth, G. J. and B. J. Graham. *Senses of Place: Senses of Time*. London, UK: Routledge, 2016. eBook Collection. EBSCOhost.

Augsburger, *David. Caring Enough To Confront. How to Understand and Express Your Deepest Feelings Toward Others*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell a division of Baker Publishing Company, 1973.

Averky, Taushev. *The Epistles and the Apocalypse: Commentary on the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, vol. III*. Jordanville, NY: Holy Trinity Seminary Press, 2018.

Bard, A. David. "Mourning Dancing." Michigan Annual Conference. The United Methodist Church. 4th Session. vol. 2. Edited by Joy A. Barret. Traverse City, MI: February 2023.

Barnard, Alan and Jonathan Spencer. eds. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology*. Second edition. London, UK: Routledge, 2010. doi:10.4324/9780203866474.

Bennett, J. "Transition Shock: Putting Culture Shock in perspective." *International and Intercultural Communication Annual* 4 (1977): 45-52.

Blackman Cyril, Edwin. *The Letter of Paul to the Romans. The Interpreters One-volume Commentary on the Bible Including the Apocrypha with General Articles.* Edited by Charles M. Layman. 791-973. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 971.

Block, P. *Community: The Structure of Belonging,* 1st ed. San Francisco, CA: Berrett Koehler Publishers, Inc. 2009.

Bolsinger, Tod. *Tempered Resilience: How Leaders Are Formed in the Crucible of Change.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2020.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, William T. Fitzgerald. *The Craft of Research, Fourth Edition.* Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Borg, Marcus. *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time*. San Francisco, CA: Harper SanFrancisco, 1994.

Branson, Mark Lau and Juan Francisco Martínez. *Churches, Cultures & Leadership: a Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011.

Brown, Nina, Thomas McIlwraith, and Laura Tubelle de Gonzalez. *Perspective: An Open Introduction to Cultural Anthropology. Second edition.* American Anthropology Association. 2020. https://perspectives.americananthropology.org/.

Bruce, F. F. *Paul: Apostle of the Free Spirit*. United Kingdom: The Paternoster Press, 1977.

_____. *Romans: An Introduction and Commentary.* Tyndale New Testament Commentaries. Volume 6. Westmont, IL: Inter-Varsity Press. 2008.

Camille, Catherine. *The Im-possibility of Interreligious Dialogue.* New York, NY: *The* Crossroad Publishing Company, 2008.

Carpenter, E. Eugene and Wayne McCown. *Asbury Bible Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.

Carson, D. A. *Biblical Theology Study Bible, eBook: Follow God's Redemptive Plan as It Unfolds throughout Scripture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan. 2018.

Carter, Charles W., Ralph Earle, and W. Ralph Thompson. eds. *The Wesleyan Bible Commentary*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.

China Institute. "Points of Contact: Confucianism and Christianity," February 24, 2011, https://www.reachingchineseworldwide.org/blog/christianity-in-china/points-of-contact-confucianism-and-christianity.

Clark, Anne L. “Remembering Pheobe in the Twelfth Century: The Forgotten Deacon in Paul’s Letter to Romans.” *Journal of Medieval Religious Cultures* 45, no. 1 (2019):1-28. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/jmedirelicult.45.1.000.

Clark-Soles, Jamie. *Women In The Bible. Interpretation Resources for the Use of Scripture in the Church*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2020.

Coogan, Michael D. ed. *The Illustrated Guide to World Religions*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003.

_____. ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible, New Revised Standard Version with The Apocrypha*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Cragg, Gerald.” The Appeals to Men of Reason and Religion and Certain Related Open Letters.” *The Works of John Wesley*, Vol. 11. December 1, 1987.

Cranfield C. E. B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Epistle to the Romans*. 2 vols. Edinburgh, UK: T. & T. Clark Limited, 1980.

Crenshaw, K. W. “Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color.” In *Foundations of Critical, Race Theory Education*. Edited by E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, and G. Ladson Billings. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2009.

Cumming, Alan. “Pauline Christianity and Greek Philosophy: A Study of the Status of Women Source.” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 34, no. 4 (Oct-Dec 1973): 517-528. https://www. jstor.org/stable/2708885.

D’Angelo, Mary Rose. “Women Partners in the New Testament.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1990): 65-86. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2500212.

Das, Veena. Critical Events: An Anthropological Perspective on Contemporary India. Delhi, India: New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 1995, 1995. Ohio LINK. EBSCOhost.

Douglas, Kelly Brown. “Teaching Womanist Theology: A case Study.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 8, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 135.

Douglas, Mark and Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty. “Revisiting Valerie Saiving’s Challenge to Reinhold Niebuhr Honoring Fifty Years of Reflection on ‘The Human Situation: A Feminine View’: Introduction and Overview.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (Spring 2012): 75-78. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press. https://www.j stor.org/stable/10.2979/jfemistudreli.28.1.75.

Edwards, Mark J. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture. New Testament Vol. VIII. Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians*. Edited by Thomas C. Oden. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2005.

Escobar, Samuel. "Refugees: A New Testament Perspective." *Transformation* 35, no. 2 (April 2018):102-108. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/90025311.

Frady, R. Julie. "Making Peace with Paul, CBE International." *Lethbridge News.* September 9, 1896. 16. https://www.jstor.org/stable /community.31880562.

Fringer, A. Robert. "The Antithetical Identity of the Philippian Opponents and Paul's Shaping of Eschatology Identity." *Aldersgate Papers* 11 (June 2015): 95.

Fulkerson, Mary McClintock. *Places of Redemption: Theology for a Worldly Church*. Oxford, UK: New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Gamble, Harry. "The Redaction of the Pauline Letters and the Formation of the Pauline Corpus." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 94, no. 3 (Sep 1975): 403-418. https:// www.jstor.org/stable/3265161.

Gilkes, Cheryl. "There Is a Work for Each One of Us: The Socio Theology of the Rev Florence Spearing Randolph." in *How Long This Road: Race, Religion, and the Legacy of C. Eric Lincoln*. Edited by Alton B. Pollard, L. H. Whelchel, Dwight N. Hopkins, and Linda E. Thomas. 138-139. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

Gorman, Michael J. *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers, Revised and Expanded Edition*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2009.

Goodspeed, Edgar. "Phoebe's Letter of Introduction." *The Harvard Theological Review* 44, no. 1 (Jan 1951): 55-57. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1508417.

Grandy, Gina. "Contemplative Leadership: The Possibilities for the Ethics of Leadership Theory and Practice." 2017. gina.grandy@uregina.ca

Hays, B. Richard. "The Letter to the Galatians, Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections." *Interpreter's Bible Commentary*. vol. 11. Edited by Jack A. Keller, Jr. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2020.

Hans, Dieter Betz. ed. *Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia.* Philadelphia, PA: Augsburg Fortress Publishers, 1989.

Heath, Gordon L. *Doing Church History*. Toronto, Canada: Clements Publishing, 2008.

Hess, Lisa M. *A Companionable Way: Path of Devotion in Conscious Love.* Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2016.

Hess, Mary E. “Survey Questions — Class Session.” United Theological Seminary. February 1, 2021.

Hillard, Asa G., III. *SBA: The Reawakening of the African Mind*. Gainesville, FL: Makare Publishing Company, 1997.

Houston. Tom. “Theological Education through the Apostles.” *Transformation* 18, no. 1 (January 2001):15-36. https://www.jstor.org/stable/43052501.

Keener, S. Craig. *Romans. A New Covenant Commentary*. Lutterworth Press, 2009. https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctt1cgdvz5.22.

Johns, L. and J. Watson. “Leadership Development of Women Preparing for Ministry.” *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 15, no. 2 (2006): 111-142.

Junior, Nyasha. *An Introduction to Womanist Biblical Interpretation.* Louisville: KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015.

Keller, Rosemary Skinner and Rosemary Radford Ruether. Eds. *Encyclopedia of Women and Religion in North America*. Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 2006.

Knitter, Paul F. *Introducing Theologies of Religions*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006.

Kochman, Thomas. *Black and White Styles in Conflict.* Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1981.

Lee, Boyung. *Transforming Congregations through Community: Faith Formation from the Seminary to the Church.* Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2013.

Leslie, E. “Womanism in the Ministry: Narratives of African Women Clergy.” Publication. No. 3611467. Doctoral Dissertation. Saybrook University. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global, 2013.

Lose, David J., Gordon S. Mikoski, Eileen D. Crowley, Rolf A. Jacobson, Scott Cormode, and Jeffrey A. Conklin-Miller. “Equipping the Equippers: The Pedagogical and Programmatic Implications of The Christians’ Callings in the World Project.” *Teaching Theology & Religion* 18, no. 4 (2015): 387-408. https://doi.org/10.1111/trth.12309.

Lovin, Robin W. and Joshua Mauldin. *Theology as Interdisciplinary Inquiry Learning with and from the Nature and Human Sciences*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2017.

MacCulloch, Diarmaid. *Christianity. The First Three Thousand Years*. New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2009.

Mainwaring, Simon James. "Place, Power, and People in Twenty-first Century Theological Education." *Anglican Theological Review* 97, no. 1 (2017): 91. EBSCOhost.

Malcolm, Lois and Janet Ramsey. "On Forgiveness and Healing: Narrative Therapy and the Gospel Story." *Word & World* 30, no. 1 (Winter 2010): 23-32.

Marcuson, J. Margaret. *Leaders Who Last: Sustaining Yourself and Your Ministry.* New York, NY: Seabury Books, 2009.

Marsden, M. George. "A Christian Perspective for Teaching of History." In *A Christian View of History*. Edited by George M. Marsden and Frank Roberts. 31-32. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975.

Mathew, Susan. "Women in the Greetings of Romans 16:1-16: A Study of Mutuality and Women's Ministry in the Letter to the Romans." *The Journal of Religion* 96, no. 2 (April 2016): 284-285. https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.2307/2654352.

McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms, Revised and Expanded.* Second Edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2014.

Merton, Thomas. *Essential Writings: Modern Spiritual Master Series.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2000.

Miles, A. and R. J. Proeschold-Bell. "Are Rural Clergy Worse Off? An Examination of Occupational Conditions and Pastoral Experiences in a Sample of United Methodist Clergy." *Sociology of Religion* 73, no. 6 (2012): 23-4.

McConnell, James V. *Understanding Human Behavior*. 5th ed. New York, NY: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1986.

Moo, Douglas J. *The Letter to the Romans.* New International Commentary on the New Testament. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2018.

Momigliano, A. Dante. "Claudius." *Encyclopedia Britannica*. December 19, 2022. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Claudius-Roman-emperor.

Newkirk, D. and B. S. Cooper. "Preparing Women for Baptist Church Leadership: Mentoring Impact on Beliefs and of Females Ministers." *Journal of Research on Christian Education* 22, no. 8 (2013): 323-43.

Oberg, K. "Culture Shock: The Problem of Adjustment to New Cultural Environments." *Practical Anthropology* 7 (1960): 177-82.

Niles, D. T. *The Message and Its Messengers*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1966.

Ott, Craig, Darrell L. Guder, Ruth Padilla DeBorst, Edward Rommen, and Ed Stetzer. *The mission of the church: five views in conversation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016. EBSCOhost.

Oden, Thomas C. *John Wesley's Teachings: Ethics and Society*. Vol. 4. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

Outler, Albert C. and Richard P. Heitzenrater. *John Wesley's Sermons: Anthropology*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1991.

Palmer, Parker J. *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 2000.

Peace, Jennifer Howe. ed. *My Neighbor's Faith: Stories of Interreligious Encounter, Growth, and Transformation.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2012.

Peterson, Brooks. *Cultural Intelligence: A Guide Working with people from other Cultures.* Hachette, UK: Intercultural Press, 2004.

Placher, William. *Essentials of Christian Theology.* London, UK: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2018.

"Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society." Volume XLVIII. Edited by E. Alan Rose (February 1992): 105-107.

Prothero, Stephen. *God is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions that Run the World and Why Their Differences Matter*. San Francisco, CA: Harper One, 2010.

Rack, Henry. *The Works of John Wesley, Vol. 10.* The Methodist Societies, The Minutes of Conference. March 1, 2011. Edited by Randy L. Maddox William B. Lawrence. Ada, MI: Baker Books, 1996.

Repko, Allen, Rick Szostak, and Michelle Phillips Buchberger. *Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies.* 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 2020.

Ricard, Virginia B. *Developing Intercultural Communications Skills*. Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1993.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Women –Church: Theology & Practice of Feminist Liturgical Communities.* San Francisco, CA: Harper& Row Publishers, 1985.

Rudolph, Christine R. "A Different Perspective: Examining Obstacles Faced By Black Clergywomen Through The Lenses of Critical Race Feminism." *The Journal of Values-Based Leadership* 16, no. 2, Article 7 (2023): doi: https://doi.org/10.22543/1948-0733.1454.

Saiving, Valerie. "The Human Situation: A Feminine View." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (1960): 75–78. doi:10.2979/jfemistudreli.28.1.75. JSTOR. 10.2979/jfemistudreli.28.1.75. S2CID 145533099.

Schreiner, R. Thomas. *Romans*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academics, 1998.

Silk, Mark. "Defining Religious Pluralism in America: A Regional Analysis." In *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. Vol. 612. *Religious Pluralism and Civil Society* (Jul. 2007).

Smart, Ninian. *The Religious Experience of Mankind*. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1984.

Smith, George. *History of Wesleyan Methodism.* Vol. 2. London, UK: Longman, Green, and Roberts, 1857-1861.

Stenschke, Christopher W. "'Your Obedience is Known to All' (Rom 16:19): Paul's References to Other Christians and Their Function in Paul's Letter to the Romans." *Novum Testamentum* 57, Fasc. 3 (2015): 251-274. Brill. https://www.jstor.org/stable/2473587.

Stewart Edward C. and Milton J. Bennett. *American Cultural Patterns: Cross-cultural Perspective.* Revised ed. Yarmouth, ME: Intercultural Press, Inc, 1991.

Taft, Zechariah. *Biographical Sketches of the Lives and Public Ministry of Various Holy Women*. Peterborough, UK: Methodist Publishing House, 1992. https://18thcenturyculture.wordpress.com/primary-sources/zechariah-taft-preface-to-eminent-and-holy-women/.

The United Methodist Book of Discipline. Nashville, TN: The United Methodist Publishing House, 2016.

This Holy Mystery: A United Methodist Understanding of Holy Communion. The United Methodist General Conference, 2004. www.GBOD.Org.

Thorley, John. "Junia, a Woman Apostle." *Novum Testamentum* 38, Fasc. 1 (Jan 1996): 18-29. Brill. https://www.jstor.org/stable/1561521Volf, Miroslav. "Exclusion and Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness and Reconciliation." Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Tiffany, Frederick C. and Sharon H. Ringe. *Biblical Interpretation: A Road Map.* Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Tomkins, Stephen**.** *John Wesley. A Biography*. Grand Rapids, MI: Cambridge, UK: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003.

Truman, A. W. "The lived experience of leadership for female pastors in religious organizations." *Journal of Applied Christian Leadership* 5, no. 2 (2011): 12.

United States Census Bureau. QuickFacts. "Chelsea, City, Michigan." https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/chelseacitymichigan/HSG445220.

Voices of Sophia. "What Is Feminist Theology?" 2008. 12-18. https://voicesofsophia. Word press.com/what-is-feminist-theology/.

Walden, Ken. J. *Practical Theology For Church Diversity. A Guide for Clergy and Congregation.* Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015.

Walker, Alice. *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens: Womanist Prose.* Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc., 1983.

Werner, David. "Leading Different Small Groups Differently in the Missional Church." *Journal of Religious Leadership* 16, no. 1 (Spring 2017): 111-137.

_____. "The Large Minutes." In *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 10. The Methodist Societies. The Minutes of Conference. Edited by Henry D. Rack. 855-857. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2011.

_____. "The One Thing Needful." In *John Wesley's Sermon: An Anthropology*. Edited by Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater. Nashville, TN. Abingdon Press, 1991.

_____. "Quotes." BrainyQuotes.com. https://www.brainyquote/john_wesley-524889.

Willimon, William H. "The spiritual formation of the pastor: call and community." *Quarterly Review* 3, no. 2 (1983): 31 42. ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials EBSCOhost.

Willhauck, Susan. "Liturgy and Education for Justice in an Age of Disbelief." *Religious Education* 91, no. 3 (1996): 352-367. ATLASerials, Religion Collection, EBSCOhost.

Wilmot, William W. *Dyadic Communication*. New York, NY: Random House, 1987.

Winkelman, Joel. "John Dewey's Theory of Vocation." *American Political Thought* 5, no. 2 (2016): 303-325. EBSCOhost.

Wilson, H. W. “Contemplative Leadership: The Possibilities for the Ethics of Leadership Theory and Practice.” *Journal of Business Ethics* 143, no. 3 (2018): 423-440. EBSCOhost.

Yong, Amos. *Hospitality and the Other: Pentecost, Christian Practices, and the Neighbor.* Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2008.

Yrigoyen, Jr., Charles and Susan E. Warrick. *Historical Dictionary of Methodism*. Scarecrow Press, 2013. ProQuest eBook Central. http://ebookcentral.Proquest.com/lib/dtl/detail.action?docID=1562859.dtl on 2023-01-15 22:10:12.

“G4921 - synistēmi – Strong’s Greek Lexicon (kjv).” Blue Letter Bible. https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g4921/kjv/tr/0-1/#lexResults.